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LONDON BIRD REPORT



London Natural History Society

The Society publishes the ornithological and natural history records of the London Area within a 20-mile radius of St. Paul's Cathedral.

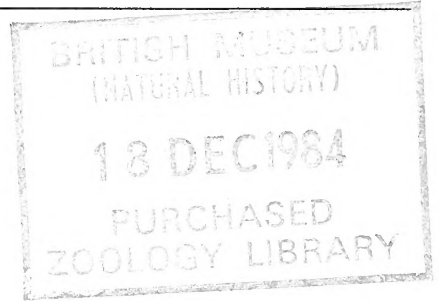
It particularly welcomes new members – experts and beginners alike – and it provides an extensive programme of lectures and films throughout the year, weekly field meetings, week-end trips, special surveys and field work. It publishes a regular bird *Bulletin* and general *Newsletter*, which give up-to-the-minute information on bird migration and other topics, a twice yearly *Programme* of activities, and the annual *London Bird Report* and *London Naturalist*. It has a large lending library of natural history books and reading circles for circulating scientific journals at a fraction of their cost; and it will advise on evening classes in ornithology and other subjects.

Many individual interests are catered for: ornithology, ecology, botany, mammal study, nature conservation, geology, archaeology, entomology, rambling and local groups.

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NUMBER 46



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	Grey Phalarope, King George V Reservoir, Essex, September 1981 (<i>D. M. Cottridge</i>)

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who has back numbers also available.

London Bird Report 1981

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Assisted by an editorial team of D. A. BOYD, M. K. DENNIS, J. FITZPATRICK, J. G. FRANCIS, J. D. HOOK, F. H. JONES, A. V. MOON, P. NAYLOR and P. J. OLIVER.

Introduction

This year, like other recent years has seen some changes in the composition of the Records Committee and it is hoped these will be the last for some time to come. Rupert Hastings has been drafted in as the recorder for Surrey, this will enable Peter Clement to devote all his energies to editing the report, a job he previously combined with the recordership. Several other minor changes must be mentioned at this point; previously references have been made to Datchet Reservoir, this is now formally called the Queen Mother Reservoir and will appear as such in these reports. Similarly, references to Berrylands S.F. in the past will now appear under Hogsmill Sewage Farm. The only other change is by way of an addition to the list of birds covered, as promised in the 1976 report records of Ring-necked Parakeet are now included in the systematic list. A paper documenting the history of this bird in the London Area is still in preparation and will appear in a forthcoming issue. Another paper also in the first stages of preparation is the history of Perry Oaks Sewage Farm. Following the response to the request for information on this page last year the Editor would like to thank those who have responded but have not yet been acknowledged.

As noted last year and repeated again this year is the decline in the number of records received from even fewer observers. It is hoped that this is only a passing phase and that contributions will return to former levels. The sentiments expressed in the 1980 Introduction can only be strongly repeated—we need to know the numbers and totals of all birds in our Area—without which there is no basis for the report. This year there is a lack of records from the Royal Parks especially in the breeding season in Regent's and St. James's Parks and is due to the small band of constant visitors not being available for censusing at that time of the year. This is regrettable but highlights how much depends on so few observers. Overall the report still reflects a high percentage of the birds seen but for how much longer? Recent events indicate that not all records worthy of publication are submitted to the London or individual county recorders.

The second Ringing Report is included and details in the most readable form the movements of birds that breed, winter or pass through the Area, a timely reminder that everyday birds we take for granted may have come many miles to be with us. In addition, several new facts have come to light, the life span of one Green Sandpiper ringed and recovered in Kent illustrates one example of how much there is still to be discovered, and how with increased coverage the London Area will continue to add to the store of information on birds.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editor gratefully acknowledges the enthusiastic support of all observers who contributed records to this edition of the *London Bird Report*. He especially thanks the recorders and the writers who helped to compile the systematic list, and D. M. Cottridge, R. J. Chandler and A. V. Moon who contributed the photographs.

He also acknowledges the many courtesies extended to members by the Greater London Council, the Thames Water Authority and the Port of London Authority. Thanks are also due to the following organisations for their generous help in the exchange of records:

British Birds Rarities Committee
 Essex Birdwatching and Preservation Society*
 Hertfordshire Natural History Society*
 Kent Ornithological Society*
 Lee Valley Project Group
 Middle Thames Natural History Society*
 Surrey Bird Club*

*Local records have been accepted on the recommendations of the respective Records Committees.

Records Committee

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*including records on the Lower Thames from London Bridge to Tilbury

†including records on the River Thames from Staines to Wandsworth

Review of the Year

Both January and February were mild months, and consequently the number of unusual species seen was relatively low, and there was no evidence of any hard weather movements. Wildfowl numbers were not high, although a count of 2,500 **Teal** at Rainham on the first day of the year was exceptional, and peak January counts at Queen Mary Res. of 1,250 **Tufted Duck**, 102 **Gadwall** and 95 **Goldeneye** are worthy of note. Sawbills were scarce, with no more than three **Smew** together anywhere, and **Goosander** flocks were no higher than 73. The only **Red-necked Grebe** seen during this period was at King George V Res. from the 1st to March 8th, and **Black-necked Grebes** again wintered on Girling Res. with six from January to early April. Single **Slavonian Grebes** were at Thorpe Water Park on Jan. 18th and Queen Mary Res. on Feb. 22nd. A **Black-throated Diver** stayed briefly at Staines Res. on Jan. 9th and a **Great Northern** was found the next day at the Queen Mother Res., Datchet (now fast becoming a favourite haunt for Divers). **Bitterns** turned up at Walthamstow on Jan. 10th and Wraysbury G.P. on the 18th, whilst three **Whooper Swans** were seen at Amwell G.P. on the 25th, and there was a lone **Shag** at Queen Mary Res. on Feb. 19th. **Ruddy Ducks** confirmed their liking for the Kempton and Walton area, with parties of up to 22 present in February, doubtless a product of recent breeding successes. Amongst the more unusual duck species seen were two **Common Scoter** on the River Thames at Erith on Jan. 4th, a **Long-tailed Duck** at Walton Res. from Jan. 18th to March 19th, and an **Eider** at Netherhall G.P. from Feb. 27th to March 8th. Barn Elms Res. produced the major surprise when a drake **Blue-winged Teal**, a new bird for the London Area was found there on Feb. 16th. A **Dipper** of the continental black-bellied race at Lemsford Springs from Jan. 25th, was joined by another in March. Rainham Marsh had its usual wintering birds with a peak of 55 **Twite** on the 24th and a **Hen Harrier** stayed for several weeks. More unusually two or three **Snow Buntings** were present during the first two months and two **Waxwings** were at Headley Heath from Feb. 7th to 12th.

After a dry start March proved to be the wettest this century, and produced the usual mixture of returning winter visitors and early summer migrants. A **Red-throated Diver** at Waltham Abbey on the 1st was the only one of the year.

The early days of April saw a pair of **Garganey** at Ruxley G.P., an early **Reed Warbler** at Bedfont and four **Black-tailed Godwits** at Beddington S.F. A spell of mild southerly winds from the 8th to 12th led to a general early arrival of further summer visitors, including an **Osprey** was at Godstone on the 12th. Amwell G.P. became host to the second American bird of the year when a drake **Ring-necked Duck** was found on the 14th. A **Golden Oriole** was present for four days at Northaw Great Wood from the 20th.

A dramatic change in the weather took place from the 22nd, the wind veered to the north and reached gale force on the 25th and 26th, bringing cold Arctic air and blizzards across the North Sea. London waters became a refuge for a remarkable collection of seabirds. Major influxes included flocks of **Kittiwakes** (with peak counts of 14 at Staines Res. and 10 at King George V Res.), three or four **Fulmars** (compared with only five London records in the previous 80 years), at least 10 **Gannets**, terns (21 **Sandwich** in late April and early May), and a few sea duck, including one **Eider**. One small bird spotted from Staines Res. causeway on the 26th proved on closer examination to be a summer plumaged **Grey Phalarope**, so very rarely seen in this plumage by British birdwatchers, and stayed long enough for plenty of observers to see it. A very unseasonal **Leach's Petrel** on the same day was further evidence of the extent of this extraordinary invasion. The last week

of April also produced an **Osprey** at Horton G.P. on 28th and a fine **Red Kite** at Aveley the next day. Numbers of **Arctic Terns** were again high with 88 at Hilfield Park Res. on the 29th.

May began with a **Wryneck** at Rye Meads on the 2nd. After torrential rain on the 3rd, further **Arctic Terns** appeared, including a record count of 130 at Staines Res. This heralded another good spell, and with the wind veering to the south, May 7th was a good day, sightings include another **Red Kite** (in Regent's Park), the only spring influx of **Black Terns** with 49 at Staines Res., a **Temminck's Stint** at Rainham Marsh and 11 **Little Gulls** at King George V Res. A **Red-backed Shrike** was at Stanstead Abbots G.P. on the 9th. **Swifts** poured in on the 10th, with thousands feeding over the reservoirs, and tern passage continued to be heavy with five **Little Terns** on May 9th and 114 **Common Terns** at five sites on the 11th. Further rarities followed during the rest of the month. The now annual **Kentish Plover** appeared at Perry Oaks S.F. on May 19th. London's second **Savi's Warbler** sang at Cheshunt G.P. on the 20th and 21st and a **Melodious Warbler** was trapped at West Thurrock on the 26th. A **Honey Buzzard** flew north over Romford and Rye Meads on the 24th and a **Golden Oriole** was at Cheshunt G.P. on the last two days of the month. The last week produced a small flurry of **Curlew Sandpipers**, resplendent in their breeding plumage and another **Temminck's Stint** at Perry Oaks S.F. on the 29th.

With the breeding season in June in full swing, some further increases were noted, with **Cetti's Warbler** (11 singing males) consolidating their position, and **Sparrowhawks** again doing well. The **Grey Herons** at Walthamstow built 128 nests the highest number ever. Likewise **Common Terns** reached 52 pairs although this could be doubled with the provision of nesting rafts at suitable sites. **Ruddy Ducks** and **Wheatear** were not proved to have bred this year, and also on the debit side there were no **Barn Owls** nesting. In Inner London, a pair of **Chiffchaffs** bred in Regent's Park for the first time in nine years. A pair of **Egyptian Geese** raised young in Essex, which could be the start of something new.

Notable in recent years for being unsettled July did not disappoint, winds were predominantly from the west and over half the month's rainfall fell on the last day. Moulting wildfowl congregated, **Great Crested Grebe** reached 300 at Staines Res. during the month and **Tufted Ducks** totalled 1,150 at Staines Res. and 1,180 at Walthamstow Res. Other birds began to meander south, **Little Ringed Plover** numbered 32 at Perry Oaks on the 5th and 50 were at Rainham on the 29th. **Garganey** began to appear in their drab eclipse plumage, and were seen at Perry Oaks and three sites in Essex. **Wood Sandpipers** were noted at Perry Oaks S.F. on the 13th and Rainham on 25th and 31st. The only passerine of any note in July was a **Red-backed Shrike** at Sevenoaks on the 16th; and by far the most notable non-passerine was an **Alpine Swift** seen over Orpington on the 26th. The same day a **Marsh Harrier** flew over Waltham Abbey.

Thunderstorms rumbled across south-east England in early August, and were often accompanied by a deluge more reminiscent of a tropical storm. This apart it was a hot dry month, winds were from an easterly quarter in the first week, from the 10th to the 12th and from the 27th into September, otherwise they were westerly. **Common Sandpipers** reached their peak in the first week and **Green Sandpiper**, as ever, slightly later when 32 were at Rainham (lower totals than in recent autumns). London's largest ever flock of **Whimbrel** was seen in Kent on the 7th; a **Marsh Harrier** drifted over High Elms on the 2nd and another was, less surprisingly, at Rainham on the 17th. Easterlies from the 10th to the 12th clearly influenced the arrival of two **Pied Flycatchers** in London's parks and about the same time 24 **Bar-tailed Godwits** flew over Epsom, 17 **Greenshank** were counted at Rainham, **Wood**

Sandpipers reached three and five at Perry Oaks S.F. and Beddington S.F. respectively, and **Little Ringed Plovers** increased to 55 at Rainham. A **Spotted Crake** showed itself at Beddington S.F., then disappeared, and presumably the same bird, popped up again in September; a **Purple Sandpiper** was photographed on the King George V Res. on the 18th.

The Bank Holiday weekend was, for once, fine and winds had now veered to the east and remained so into September. During this weekend five **Wrynecks** were seen, several **Curlew Sandpipers** and another high total of **Greenshank**, all in Essex, and lastly two **Arctic Skuas**, on different days, at Queen Mary Res.

September continued where August left off and in the first six days a further nine **Pied Flycatchers** and six **Wrynecks** arrived, in addition to 26 **Whinchats** at Rammey Marsh, a collection that wouldn't be considered poor on the east coast. The weekend of the 12th and 13th provided species from all points of the compass, the best by far was a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** at Perry Oaks, reappearing at this site after a gap of 28 years and at the nearby Staines Res. there was a **Leach's Petrel**, three **Knot** and a huge record total of 39 **Black-necked Grebes**. Hot on the heels of the Buff-breasted came another Nearctic wader to Perry Oaks S.F., this time a **Pectoral Sandpiper**. Two more **Pied Flycatchers** and two more **Wrynecks** had been seen by the 23rd. Towards the end of the month vigorous depressions raced across the country bringing with them strong west or south-west winds and rain, and influenced by this further **Pectoral Sandpipers** arrived – at Perry Oaks and Rainham. But attention was soon diverted when it became clear that a multiple arrival of **Grey Phalaropes** had occurred – their buoyant manner appearing almost disdainful of the rough and blustery conditions. In addition to a single **Red-necked Phalarope** which graced King George V Res., for several days it was in close association with a **Grey Phalarope**, a unique London experience.

Traditionally a month when minds, and often birdwatchers, turn elsewhere the pace in London quietened considerably in October; the last **Reed** and **Garden Warblers** were seen on the 3rd, a **Honey Buzzard** drifted slowly over Queen Mary on the 4th, and it, or another, was seen over Beddington on the 11th; and a **Lapland Bunting** flew over Barn Elms Res. on the 8th. A further two **Grey Phalaropes** appeared, although they could perhaps have been earlier birds that had re-circulated. Apart from brief spells from the east or north-east the winds were mainly westerly during the month. On the 18th a **Mediterranean Gull** was at Staines Res. and a **Red-necked Grebe** at Girling Res., and a further hint of winter came with a **Great Grey Shrike** at Romford on the 23rd. Nearly 2,000 **Chaffinches** passed west over London on the 21st, but this was eclipsed on the 24th – a spectacular day for diurnal passage – when nearly 3,000 **Chaffinches** and 2,000 **Redwing** headed in the same direction, the same day also produced a **Snow Bunting** at Barn Elms and a **Merlin** at Foots Cray Meadows.

November was a month of exceptionally late migrants and mainly dry and cold weather, with gale-force winds in mid-month. In the first eleven days delayed, or lost, migrants – **Hoopoe**, **Willow Warbler** and **Turtle Dove** – mingled with early winter visitors – **Whooper Swan** and two **Hen Harriers**. The last **Wheatear** was at London airport on the 13th, the right place for a departure. A flock of 23 **Common Scoter** in the Lea Valley was presumably brought in by the gales on the 15th, when Fisher's Green had a good day with a **Black-throated Diver**, **Bittern** and a **Snow Bunting**; the latter species were also seen at three other localities in this period. Further disorientated migrants were a **House Martin** on the 19th, two **Swallows** on the 22nd and lastly a **Yellow Wagtail** on the 26th. Two **Hooded Crows** were

in Kent later in the month and Beddington closed a good period with a **Hen Harrier** on the 29th.

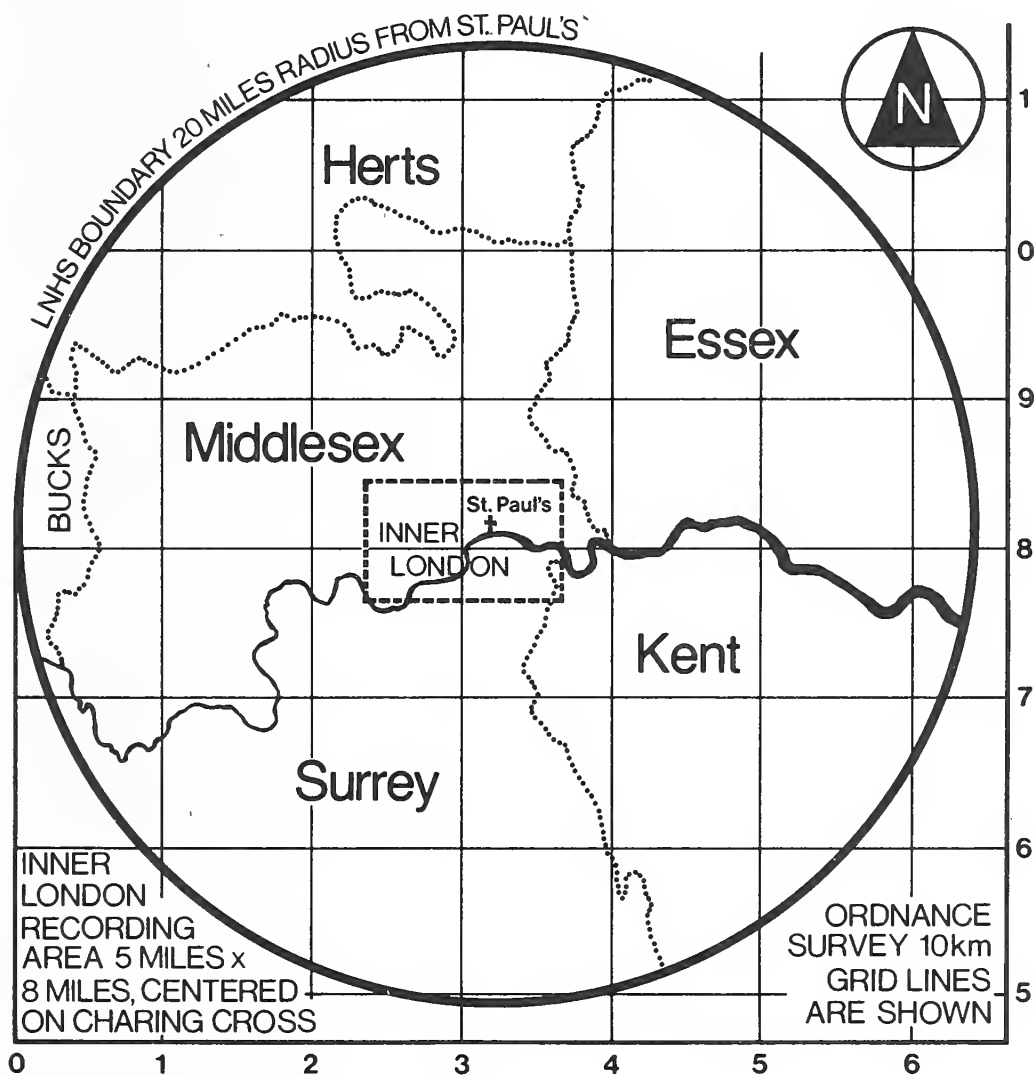
The first ten days of December were quiet, however as the skies lightened on the morning of the 8th dismayed drivers and delighted birdwatchers surveyed the carpet of snow that lay thickly on the ground. Further snowfalls brought chaos to the roads and plummeting temperatures caused some gravel pits to freeze over. Few birdwatchers ventured out until the weekend of the 12th to 13th, when 1,500 **Skylarks** streamed SW in west London and also 1,000 **Woodpigeons** moved S along the Lea Valley; at Cheshunt truly mammoth totals of 555 **Siskin** and 375 **Redpoll** were counted, and in addition a further 350 **Siskin** were at Denham. More snow fell on the 13th but birds were already on the move and included at least four **Bitterns**, two each of **Slavonian Glebe**, **Hen Harrier**, **Scaup** and **Waxwing** as well as two herds of **Bewick's Swans**. Few patterns were noticeable from the 21st to the year's end, but a huge exodus of almost 7,000 **Skylarks** headed south over Erith on the 22nd. During this period three **Black-throated Divers**, a further three **Bitterns** and two each of **Red-necked Grebe**, **Hen Harrier**, **Brent Goose**, **Scaup** and **Waxwing**, as well as another immense flock of **Siskin** – 500 at Harefield Moor – and a large flock of **Twite** at Rainham were reported. Also during the month a small influx of **Short-eared** and **Long-eared Owls** occurred, 47 **Woodcock** sightings were reported and there were at least 15 flocks of over 100 **Siskin**. December's list of birds provides stark testimony to the havoc that the icy grip of winter can wreak on birdlife, even though it does provide dramatic birdwatching.

Arrival and Departure Dates of Migrants

<i>Summer Migrants</i>	<i>Arrival</i>			<i>Departure</i>		
Black Tern	May 7	King George V Res.	GBs	Oct. 18	Queen Mary Res.	PCt
Little Ringed Plover	Mar. 20	Stanstead Abbots G.P.	GJW	Oct. 10	Rainham Marsh	MKD
		Sevenoaks G.P.	AHH			
Turtle Dove	Apr. 12	Sevenoaks G.P.	AHH	Nov. 11	Regent's Park	TD
Cuckoo	Apr. 12	Holmethorpe S.P.	DPC	Oct. 6	Regent's Park	TD
		Bedfont Quarry	RRG			
Nightjar	May 15	Symondshyde	HNHS	Aug. 12	Mount Wood	LC
Swift	Apr. 25	King George V Res.	JF	Oct. 25	Staines Moor	ALh
Sand Martin	Mar. 13	Wraysbury G.P.	AJD	Oct. 25	Staines Res.	PG
Swallow	Mar. 29	Cheshunt G.P.	GJW	Nov. 22	Beddington S.F.	mo
House Martin	Mar. 21	Kempton Park Res.	HRG	Nov. 19	Cheshunt G.P.	GJW
Tree Pipit	Mar. 15	Stocker's Lake	IGJ	Oct. 16	Dagnam	AJG
Yellow Wagtail	Mar. 28	Barn Elms Res.	RRL	Nov. 26	Beddington S.F.	KDGM
Nightingale	Apr. 15	Prince's Coverts, Esher	JET	Aug. 8	Queen Mary G.P.	HRS
Redstart	Apr. 5	Barnes	DM	Nov. 22	Rainham	IGJ, MKD
Whinchat	Apr. 13	Epsom Common	CKD, POD	Oct. 22	Headley Heath	CKD, POD
Wheatear	Mar. 14	Kempton Park Res.	HRG	Nov. 13	London Airport	JAS
Grasshopper Warbler	Apr. 11	Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG	—		
Sedge Warbler	Mar. 28	Stanstead Abbots G.P.	GJW	Oct. 3	Bedfont G.P.	RRG
Reed Warbler	Apr. 4	Bedfont Quarry	RRG	Oct. 15	Bedfont G.P.	RRG
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr. 10	Denham	MTNHS	Oct. 3	Wanstead	CWP
Whitethroat	Apr. 8	Edmonton S.F.	GJW	Sept. 28	Regent's Park	TD
Garden Warbler	Apr. 15	Park Downs, Banstead	LR	Oct. 3	Potters Bar	JPW
Wood Warbler	Apr. 15	Hainault Forest	MKD	Sept. 2	Regent's Park	SB
Willow Warbler	Mar. 26	five localities	mo	Nov. 3	Woldingham	IGM
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr. 30	Kew Gardens	PJE	Sept. 27	Osterley Park	DGH
					Havering	MKD
Pied Flycatcher	Apr. 15	New Malden	JET	Sept. 27	Wanstead	CWP
<i>Winter Migrants</i>	<i>Departure</i>			<i>Arrival</i>		
Fieldfare	May 4	Osterley Park	DGH	Aug. 31	Alexandra Park	DPy
Redwing	Apr. 22	Walton-on-the-Hill	CKD, POD	Sept. 15	Regent's Park	TD
Brambling	May 5	Stocker's Lake	HJF, TRD	Oct. 18	Petts Wood	BB
					Beddington S.F.	GDM
Siskin	Apr. 12	Bayford (H)	BW	Sept. 27	Dagnam Park	AJG

Recording Arrangements

The Society's recording area, which in this report is called the 'London Area', is bounded by a circle of 20 miles radius centred on St. Paul's Cathedral. Within the area, the original county boundaries are used for recording purposes, rather than the new administrative counties. In addition, there is a special recording zone for Inner London (a rectangle 5 miles \times 8 miles, centred on Charing Cross). All records of interest are welcome from members and non-members, and these should be sent to the appropriate Recorder (see list on page 4).



It will assist the speedy entering of records if the Society's recording sheets are used (available from Recorders on request), and if records are listed in the order followed in the *London Bird Report*. Separate sheets should be used for each recording area. Completed recording sheets should be submitted in August for the period January to July, and in early January for August to December.

Records of rare and unusual species in the London Area are examined by the Records Committee before inclusion in the *London Bird Report*. Published records need to stand the scrutiny of not only today's readers but

also anyone who in future years may refer to the systematic list. Brief field-notes are therefore required to provide supporting evidence of correct identification and authenticity for the following species:

All rare species

All out of season migrants

All divers	Little Gull away from regular haunts
Slavonian Grebe	All terns except Common and Black
Red-necked and Black-necked Grebes except at regular haunts	All auks
Petrels and Shearwaters	Long-eared and Short-eared Owls
Gannet and Shag	Wryneck
All bitterns	Woodlark
Hérons other than Grey	Races of <i>Anthus spinoletta</i> other than Rock Pipit and Water Pipit at regular localities
Bewick's and Whooper Swans	White Wagtail in autumn
All geese except Canada	Races of hybrids of <i>Motacilla flava</i> other than Yellow Wagtail
Ferruginous Duck, Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Velvet Scoter and female Red-breasted Merganser	<i>M.f.flavissima</i>
All birds-of-prey excluding Kestrel and Sparrowhawk (except Inner London)	Waxwing
Quail	Ring Ouzel
Rails and crakes, except Water Rail, Moorhen and Coot	Unusual warblers
All waders of irregular occurrence	Firecrest
All skuas	Willow Tit away from regular haunts
All gulls of irregular occurrence including Iceland, Glaucous and Kittiwake	All shrikes
	Twite, Crossbill; Lapland, Snow and Cirl Buntings

Fieldnotes for each observation should be submitted to the recorder immediately following the observation, rather than waiting until the end of the year. Evidence needs to be brief but relevant, and should include a description of the essential features upon which identification was based, relative size, flight, calls, duration and distance of observation, and the observers' previous experience of this and similar species.

NATIONAL RARITIES

Records of national rarities (see list in *British Birds* 67 : 347–8) should be submitted preferably via the local recorder for forwarding to the national committee. If sent direct, a copy of the submission should be sent to the recorder. Observers are asked to submit records promptly to ensure acceptance and publication in the same year.

RARE BREEDING BIRDS

Breeding records of rare species (see list in *British Birds* 66 : 174) should be submitted preferably via the local recorder (stating degree of confidentiality required) for forwarding to the national Rare Breeding Birds Panel. All reports of these species (and others, less rare) are treated in complete confidence at county level. With the exception of Black Redstart, names of localities are never published and only the name of the county is given in the *London Bird Report*.

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Birds of the London Area, 1981

with Additions and Corrections for previous years

A REPORT OF THE BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

The classification of species in this report is that adopted by K. H. Voous in his *List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species* (reprinted 1977 from *Ibis* 115 : 612-38 and *Ibis* 119 : 223-50, 376-406). Sequence and nomenclature follow the 'British Birds' *List of Birds of the Western Palearctic* (1978).

For recording purposes all species have been given numbers, with suffix letters for subspecies, but it should be noted that this numbering has no significance outside the London Area.

Observers' initials in the report are shown against principal records. A full list of observers appears on pages 11 and 12. The abbreviation 'mo' used for long-stay records indicates 'many observers'.

The six counties within the London Area are signified by initials in the report: E = Essex, H = Hertfordshire, M = Middlesex, B = Buckinghamshire, K = Kent and S = Surrey. Inner London records are normally under the respective counties (Middlesex and Surrey), but abbreviated as 'IL' in tables. For direction of flight, cardinal points are shortened to N, NE, NNE, etc. Other abbreviations are: Res. = reservoir, G.P. = gravel pit, N.R. = nature reserve, S.P. = sand pit, S.F. = sewage farm or works, and *Lond. Bird Rep.* or *LBR* = *London Bird Report*.

For a full appreciation of many of the records in this report, a detailed map of the London Area will be found useful. Reference should also be made to the Society's books *Birds of the London Area* (1957 and 1964) and *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the London Area* (1977), which gave the continuous history of species from 1900. A complete London Area Checklist (1901-77) appears in *London Bird Report* 43 : 71-84.

1 Red-throated Diver

E Waltham Abbey G.P., one on Mar. 1st was slightly oiled (JF).

2 Black-throated Diver

E Singles at Fisher's Green G.P. on Nov. 15th (GJW) and at King George V Res. from Dec. 22nd to 25th (CFn, JF, PJV).

B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, one on Dec. 25th, remaining well into 1982.

M Staines Res., one on Jan. 9th (JAS, MJW).

S Inner London: Surrey Docks, one on Dec. 31st (LSF).

3 Great Northern Diver

B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, one from Jan. 10th to Mar. 14th (EEG, REY *et al.*), another from Dec. 25th to the end of the year (FRC *et al.*).

Diver *sp.*

K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Nov. 7th (AHH).

6 Little Grebe

Breeding records, large counts and Inner London records are given.

- E Bred at Berwick Ponds and West Thurrock (four pairs).
- H Bred at Amwell G.P. (seven pairs), Cassiobury Park, Hilfield Park Res. (two pairs), Maple Cross S.F. (six to eight pairs), Rye Meads S.F. (seven pairs) and Stocker's Lake (two pairs). Amwell G.P., 53 on Jan. 18th.
- M Bred at Bayhurst Wood Pond, Brent Res. (two pairs), Fray's River, Denham (one pair), Perry Oaks S.F. (two pairs), Queen Mary G.P., Ruislip N.R. and probably at Tarleton's Lake. Kempton Park Res., 35 to 40 on Sept. 26th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on Mar. 16th and 20th, another on Apr. 2nd and two on the 3rd; one from Nov. 19th to 24th with two on the 21st. Regent's Park, a pair from Apr. 9th to the 25th and one from Aug. 18th to Oct. 15th and on Dec. 14th. St. James's Park, three on Apr. 8th and singles on Apr. 12th and 16th.
- B Bred at Old Slade N.R. (two pairs) and at Wraysbury G.P. (three pairs), where 30 were seen on Sept. 13th.
- K Bred at Erith Marsh, Ruxley and Thamesmead (two pairs) and attempted to breed at Littlebrook G.P.
- S Bred at Black Pond, Esher (two pairs), River Mole, Cobham, Epsom Common, Godstone Res. N.R., Holmethorpe S.P., (probably six pairs present but only two young seen), Lonsdale Road Res. and possibly on Bookham Common.

7 Great Crested Grebe

Breeding pairs were reported as follows:

	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Herts</i>	<i>Middx</i>	<i>Inner London</i>	<i>Bucks</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Surrey</i>	<i>Total</i>
1980	43	49	47	6	8	8	11	172
1981	50	21	35	4	1+	3+	10	124

The numbers for 1981 are understated because no information was received on the numbers nesting at Wraysbury G.P. or Sevenoaks G.P. In Inner London, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, two pairs bred, raising three and four young respectively, a third pair were unsuccessful. Regent's Park, two pairs were present in spring but only one pair nested. St. James's Park, a pair present on Mar. 3rd and a single bird on May 7th.

In 1980 a total of 350 on census waters was noted as nearly double that recorded in most winters, but in 1981 a further increase to 426 was recorded, no doubt as a result of the cold weather. By contrast, the September count on census waters was only 442, a return to the more usual numbers of recent years after the peak of over 800 counted in 1980.

Counts in excess of 100 are summarized, and as usual, occurred mostly in the early autumn.

- E King George V Res., 112 in September.
- M Staines Res., 130 on Jan. 31st. In the late summer, 70 on June 21st increased to 235 by July 5th and reached a peak of 300 between July 29th and Aug. 2nd. These were described by MJR as moulting birds, the same observer noted that this locality is now more favoured than Queen Mary Reservoir. There were 160 at Staines Res. on Dec. 15th.
- S Queen Elizabeth II Res., 130 in September.

8 Red-necked Grebe

- E King George V Res., one from Jan. 1st until Apr. 6th (JF). Girling Res., one from Oct. 18th (DSy) was joined by another on Dec. 5th (JF), and a total of three were present from Dec. 30th into 1982 (AJGy).
- M King George VI Res., one on Nov. 8th (AVM,PN). Staines Res. one on Dec. 6th (GDM) and a single at Harefield Moor G.P. on Dec. 24th (RRD).

9 Slavonian Grebe

- E King George V Res., one on Apr. 30th (CFn). Girling Res., one on Dec. 16th (JF). Walthamstow Res., one on Dec. 18th and 23rd (PFr,CA) was the bird originally at the Girling Reservoir.
- H Cheshunt G.P., one in almost full summer plumage on Apr. 24th (MJO,DNC) remained until May 13th (mo).
- M Singles at Queen Mary Res., on Feb. 22nd (JAH,PN) and Stoke Newington Res. on Dec. 26th (GGB,TG).
- S Thorpe Water Park one on Jan. 18th (DKJW).

10 Black-necked Grebe

- E Girling Res., up to six present from Jan. 1st to Apr. 5th, and up to four from Sept. 27th to Dec. 31st (JF *et al.*). King George V Res., one on Sept. 6th and 27th (JF). Walthamstow Res., singles from Apr. 14th to May 1st, Sept. 24th and Oct. 3rd (PF,JT,GBs). Wanstead Park, one from Apr. 24th to 29th (DS *et al.*).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one from Jan. 4th to the 18th (MJO,DNC *et al.*).
- M Staines Res., present from Jan. 1st to May 12th, with a maximum of five on Apr. 5th and 6th, and from July 9th until the end of the year with the unprecedented maximum of 39 on Sept. 13th. Queen Mary Res., seven on Aug. 5th and singles on several other dates in the autumn (MJR). King George VI Res., up to three during August, and one on Sept. 13th (PN). Harefield Moor G.P., one on Aug. 3rd (PN).
- S Island Barn Res., two present during the winter until Mar. 15th one in full summer plumage on July 19th and two present on Dec. 18th (DP,DSD). Walton Res., one on Jan. 24th (JET) and one from Nov. 7th to 24th (JJB,SDBWS). Field Common, Esher, one on gravel pit on Mar. 29th (SDBWS). Barn Elms Res., one nearly in full summer plumage on May 9th (RBH).

The maximum number of 39 at Staines Reservoir on Sept. 13th is the most ever seen together in the London Area. Previous maximum totals—all in September and at Staines Res.—have been 25 in 1973; 23 in 1980; 20 in 1978; 17 in 1979; 15 in 1974; 14 in 1969 and 1971. It is unlikely that this figure can be currently matched by another inland (non-breeding) water in the whole of Great Britain. Only in some of the coastal estuaries and harbours is this figure—in mid-winter—approached.

12 Fulmar

- E King George V Res., one on Apr. 27th was found dead the next day (AJGy,PJV,JF).
- M Queen Mary Res., one on Apr. 27th (GAR). King George VI Res., one on May 2nd (PN).

S Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 27th (RBH).

Another, or perhaps one of the above was seen flying SE along the River Thames at Runnymede which is just outside the western boundary on the same day as three of these four records—Apr. 27th. All were birds driven into the Area by strong northerly gales that also brought other sea-birds to various parts of London. Four in one year is without precedent and the bird at Barn Elms was the first seen alive in Surrey.

18 **Manx Shearwater**

1969 Additional Record.

B Old Slade N.R., one on July 1st (MTNHS).

1974 Additional Record.

M Wraysbury Res., one on Sept. 3rd (EEG).

1980 Additional Record

E Plaistow, E13 one picked up and released on Sept. 12th had been ringed as a juvenile at Penally, Dyfed on Sept. 8th 1980.

The 1969 and 1974 records are the earliest appearance in the London Area; not previously (or subsequently) recorded before Sept. 5th. The bird that occurred in July was truly lost; at this time of year they should be either at the breeding grounds (the nearest is on Lundy in the Bristol Channel—200 miles due west) or feeding at sea. Non-breeding immatures do not normally return to British waters from the South Atlantic in the first year of life. The total now stands at 20 for the London Area this century.

23 **Leach's Petrel**

E King George V Res., one on Apr. 26th (PJV *et al.*).

M Staines Res., one on Sept. 12th (PN,AVM,RBH *et al.*).

Apart from a May record in 1977, the April sighting is unique outside the September to December period. The appearance came with a small wreck of storm-blown sea-birds in the Area after SW gales, also involved were Fulmars, Kittiwakes, Gannets and a Grey Phalarope. The September record reflects a southerly movement of birds being driven down the west coast by strong winds at the time. The total now approaches 40 for this century.

25 **Gannet**

E Ilford, one found exhausted on Apr. 24th was taken to Wanstead but died on the 27th (CWP,WCG). King George V Res., one from Apr. 24th to 29th (AJGy,PAB,PJV). Netherhall G.P., one on Apr. 27th (*per* M $\overline{C}e$). Roydon G.P., one on Apr. 28th was caught and released at Rye Meads where it was subsequently found dead (TS,RMRG). Walthamstow Res., one on Apr. 29th was very possibly the same bird seen earlier at King George V Res. Wanstead Park, one on May 1st was caught then released at King George V Res. but later found dead on May 3rd.

H Panshanger, one on Apr. 27th (FCB). Rye Meads S.F., one released there on Apr. 29th was later found dead, had earlier been found at Roydon G.P.

M Ealing, one flew NE on Apr. 27th (BAS). Staines Res., one present in the afternoon of Apr. 27th appeared to be in good health, diving and swimming (WM,JAS,PAW).

B Horton G.P., one on Apr. 27th was probably the same bird that was later seen at Staines Res. (AJD). Old Slade N.R., one on Apr. 16th flew in from the NE, appeared weak was caught and looked after but died on the 26th, subsequently sexed as a female and about five or six years old (NS).

S Pen Ponds, Richmond Park, one flew E on Feb. 14th (JHt).

Even allowing for some duplication this is the highest number of Gannets ever to be recorded in one year; at least ten birds involved, seven of which were in the period Apr. 24th to the 29th. Other sea-bird wrecks in the London Area in the past have never included these birds; prior to this only two in one year—1979—was the maximum number. It is of interest to note that five of the birds involved died—as is often the case in sea-bird wrecks—perhaps indicating that only the very sick or weakest birds are susceptible to being storm driven off their intended course.

26 Cormorant

E Fisher's Green, reported in all months except July, with maxima of 86 on Feb. 7th and 120 in December (GJW). Walthamstow Res., present throughout the year with maxima of 166 of Feb. 1st and 79 on Dec. 13th (CA,GBs).

H Colne and Lea Valleys, parties of up to 30 reported from several localities in most months. Maxima of 35 at Cheshunt G.P. on Jan. 18th (HNHS), 40 at Stocker's Lake on Dec. 31st (JDn) and more surprisingly, 42 flew N at Stanstead Abbots G.P. on July 27th (GJW).

M Harefield Moor G.P., maxima of 110 on Feb. 7th (CIB) and 112 on Dec. 5th (JE). Wraysbury Res., present in all months, with maxima at roost of 92 on Mar. 1st and 90 on Nov. 22nd (AVM,RBH). Up to 12 reported from several other localities. Inner London: Hyde Park, singles in March, up to four from Nov. 16th to mid-December (DAB). Regent's Park, maximum of 11 on Jan. 9th, 5 on July 27th and six on Nov. 9th (SB,TD).

B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, maximum of 30 on Sept. 12th (GCG); smaller numbers at several other localities in the winter.

K Away from the River Thames, the only records were of one or two at Sevenoaks G.P. on several dates (AHH) and two flying over Petts Wood on May 2nd (TJT).

S Queen Elizabeth II Res., the maximum of 97 on Feb. 15th is a decrease from the maximum of 200+ in the last two years (DGn,CO). Walton Res., maximum of 67 on Mar. 23rd (JET); smaller numbers at numerous localities mostly along the River Thames. Inner London: River Thames, Battersea to Lambeth, up to three on ten dates from January to Apr. 9th but four together flew NE high over Waterloo Bridge on Feb. 14th; and up to four present from Oct. 8th to December (CB,PJSn).

27 Shag

H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Nov. 8th (HNHS).

M Queen Mary Res., one on Feb. 19th (Pct). Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Nov. 6th (TD).

30 Bittern

E Singles at Walthamstow Res., on Jan. 10th (GBs), Fisher's Green on

Nov. 15th, Nazeing G.P. on Nov. 19th (GJW) and Sewardstone G.P. on Dec. 26th and 27th (PAB,AJG).

H Rye Meads, single birds on Nov. 17th and Dec. 17th (RMRG). Cheshunt G.P., two Dec. 17th (GJW) and one on Dec. 20th and 24th (FCB,RJCe). Stocker's Lake, one on Dec. 30th (JDe,RRD).

M Harefield Moor G.P., one on Dec. 19th was considered to be the same bird that was seen later at Stocker's Lake (IGJ). Brent Res., one on Dec. 30th (LAB). Queen Mary G.P., one on Dec. 31st (HRG).

B Wraysbury G.P., one on Jan. 18th (LGF).

K Ruxley G.P., one from Dec. 20th to the end of the month (GBC *et al.*).

S One found recently dead in the River Thames at Ravens Ait, Surbiton, on Dec. 22nd (JC).

A fairly typical number of appearances but two main influxes evident; three in four days in November and nine in 13 days in December.

39 Grey Heron

Widely reported throughout the year. Breeding records and large counts are given.

E Walthamstow Res., 128 nests the largest number ever recorded here (PRy *et al.*). Waltham Abbey, 28 occupied nests (TGL). West Thurrock, 100 at roost on Dec. 13th (EBWPS).

H Stocker's Lake, three pairs again bred at the site established in 1977.

M Harefield Moor G.P., 16 occupied nests (JE,IGJ). Kempton Park Res., 40 occupied nests. Inner London: Regent's Park, 12 pairs reared 16 young (JPW).

S Gatton Lake, at least three pairs bred (DAC). Kew Gardens, a pair attempted to breed but the eggs were taken by crows, the first record of nesting here (RBH).

The record number of nests at Walthamstow makes this site the second largest heronry in Great Britain. Numbers have fluctuated over the past 25 years, from 62 occupied nests in 1958, down to 34 nests in 1963 and 1964 following a prolonged severe winter, but steadily increasing since then until in the last five years only once have the numbers been below 100 pairs.

46 Mute Swan

Breeding pairs were reported as detailed below, numbers showed a marked decline from 1980.

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Inner London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	Total
1980	4	18	11	1	1	3	8	46
1981	5	8	10	1	—	2	6	32

Counts in excess of 50, or, where lower, sector maxima are given or summarized.

E King George V Res., 44 in April.

H Troy Mill G.P., 50 in December.

M Queen Mary Res., up to 52 in July and 61 in August and early September.

B Wraysbury G.P., 26 in September.

- K Littlebrook G.P., 11 in September.
 S Lonsdale Road Res., 12 in October.

A paper documenting the decline of this species appears on page 87.

47 Bewick's Swan

- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., two on Dec. 18th (RA, RSL). Troy Mill G.P., eight on Dec. 13th (IGJ, DR).
 M Harrow, two flew W on Dec. 12th (PAW). Staines Res. and King George VI Res., one flew W towards Staines Moor on Dec. 28th (CIB).
 S Barn Elms Res., an adult on Dec. 21st (PEB).

48 Whooper Swan

- H Amwell G.P., three on Jan. 25th, Feb. 1st and Mar. 1st (GJW, FCB). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Dec. 16th and one from Dec. 22nd to 25th with a second present on the latter date. Cheshunt G.P., an adult from Dec. 28th to 31st (GJW).
 S Beddington S.F., an adult flew NNE on Nov. 8th (DH). Kew Gardens, an adult flew W on Dec. 15th (RBH).

47/48 Bewick's/Whooper Swan

- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., 11 flying N on Dec. 19th were thought to be Whooper (RA, RSh).
 S Epsom, about 70 flew ENE on Mar. 12th (LW).

51 White-fronted Goose

- M Hampton Hill, a small flock heard flying over at 05.30 hours on Feb. 5th (KFB). Eastcote, nine flew SE on Dec. 11th (RDNHS).
 K Northfleet, 27 flew W on Dec. 27th (LFW).

53 Greylag Goose

All records are presumed to relate to birds originating from captive stock. Breeding records and large counts are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., two pairs bred.
 H Stocker's Lake, one pair bred. Maple Cross S.F., 40 on Feb. 7th and June 25th.
 M Moorhall G.P., one pair bred. Harefield Moor G.P., 44 on July 12th. South Harefield, 50 on Nov. 15th.
 K Sevenoaks G.P., present throughout the year, with a maximum of 466 on Sept. 21st.

49-52 Grey Goose *sp*

- M Shepperton, 170 flew S in three flocks on Jan. 13th (HWE). Staines Res., 16 flew N on Dec. 6th (WGH).
 S Wallington, 55 flew E on Mar. 12th (KDGM). Beddington S.F., seven flew SW on Dec. 13th (DH).

55 Canada Goose

The minimum number of broods are summarized in the table:

	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Herts</i>	<i>Middx</i>	<i>Inner London</i>	<i>Bucks</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Surrey</i>	<i>Total</i>
Broods	29	16	18	11	9	2	15	100
Sites	2	3	8	3	1	2	7	26

The larger counts in each sector are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., maxima of 230 on Feb. 16th, 278 on June 12th and 250 on Dec. 13th (RLn).
 H Broxbourne G.P., 325 on Aug. 29th; Maple Cross S.F., maximum of 250 on Jan. 18th (MCRG); Stocker's Lake, maximum of 450 on Sept. 9th (HB).
 M Kempton and Stain Hill Reservoirs, maximum of 410 on Nov. 14th (DP). Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, 300 on July 17th and 247 on Nov. 16th. St. James's Park, maximum count of 107 on Aug. 21st (PJO).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., 229 on Aug. 28th (AHH).
 S Holmethorpe S.P., maxima of 250 on Jan. 4th and 265 on Oct. 4th (DPC,RWHS).

57 Brent Goose

- E Rainham, one on Feb. 1st (RG). King George V Res., one on Dec. 25th (PJV).
 M Staines Res., one on Apr. 26th (JAH).
 K Ruxley G.P., 15 flew E on Mar. 7th (RTk,SJG). Dartford Marsh, one on Dec. 26th (SC).
 S Beddington S.F., 15 flying SE on Mar. 7th are presumed to be those seen at Ruxley (DAC).

In addition to the two sightings of the flock of 15, what was undoubtedly the same flock, but this time of 16 birds, was seen on Frensham Ponds in the SW corner of Surrey in the early hours of Mar. 7th.

59 Egyptian Goose

- E Fisher's Green, one pair raised two young.
 H Cheshunt G.P., a pair on Mar. 12th. Panshanger Park, one on May 2nd. Radlett, one on Nov. 15th.
 M Hampton Court Park, a single bird from May to October.

60 Ruddy Shelduck

All records are of feral birds.

- E Barking, one on Dec. 13th. Rainham Marsh, up to three on several dates in April, May and June, three on Aug. 22nd and two on Oct. 17th. Walthamstow Res., a drake and two ducks throughout the year.
 M Stoke Newington Res., a pair on Dec. 29th.
 S Barn Elms Res., two on Feb. 17th. Richmond Park, a female on Mar. 8th.

61 Shelduck

Breeding season and Inner London records are summarized and peak counts given for the Lower Thames. Otherwise widely reported in all sectors, usually in parties of less than ten.

E Rainham Marsh, three pairs bred. Thurrock, a pair with a creche of 18 ducklings on June 27th. The Lower Thames records were all from the Essex marshes or on Barking Reach; the peak monthly counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barking		41			10		76	115		160
Rainham	300	150	50	200	200	10	50		150	170
Thurrock										80

M In spite of many records in April and May the only evidence of breeding in this sector was of an adult with six flying juveniles at Perry Oaks S.F. on July 12th and of two adults with six young at King George VI Res., on July 18th, but the actual area of breeding was not discovered. Maximum April and May records were received from Highway Farm, Harefield (two), Kempton Res., (12), King George VI Res., (nine), Perry Oaks S.F., (eight), Queen Mary Res., (six), Staines Res., (four) and Wraysbury Res., (five). Inner London: free flying birds were present regularly in St. James's Park and singles flew over Gaskin St. N1 on Mar. 27th and over Regent's Park on May 26th.

B Wraysbury G.P., a pair in April and May.

K Records for the River Thames are given under (E) above.

S Beddington S.F., two in late April and early May.

63 Mandarin

All breeding records are given, together with all reports of birds away from the main Surrey breeding areas.

E Epping Forest, eight on Feb. 15th, one pair later bred.

H Amwell G.P., one from Dec. 17th to 28th. Stocker's Lake, a drake from Mar. 6th to June 17th was also seen at other nearby localities, and was joined by a duck on June 15th.

M Single males at Staines Res. on Jan. 31st, Osterley Park on Feb. 22nd and June 21st, Clissold Park on Dec. 12th and Wood Green Res. on Dec. 25th.

B Wraysbury G.P., up to four on several dates throughout the year.

K Sevenoaks G.P., one from September to December.

S At least one pair bred at Ashted Common, Epsom Common (three pairs bred but only four young seen), Hersham S.F., Leatherhead and Walton-on-the-Hill; pairs were present in at least seven other suitable sites in the breeding season.

WILDFOWL

Table 1. Monthly wildfowl counts—mean of November to February counts or, in italics, peak winter counts.

	1977/78	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82
Wigeon	152	285	192	208	236
Gadwall	102	113	156	189	216
Teal	615	1,657	1,327	1,079	1,019
Mallard	2,777	3,265*	2,220**	2,174**	2,391
Shoveler	538*	677	465	748	846
Pochard	799	1,156	5,355	1,109	1,457
Tufted Duck	2,569	4,066	6,969	4,735	3,733
<i>Goldeneye</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>188</i>	<i>204</i>	<i>248</i>
<i>Smew</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Goosander</i>	<i>149</i>	<i>292</i>	<i>151</i>	<i>156</i>	<i>272</i>

*Incorporates extrapolated figures in excess of 10% of total count in one or more months.

**Omits Gatton for which no counts received since 1977/78 when there were 100-200 in mid-winter.

The comments **in heavy type** at the beginning of the relevant species account refer to the monthly counts in the 1981/82 season, and the mean (or peak) counts for the five latest seasons appear in Table 1.

The aggregate of the Wildfowl counts and Lower Thames records for January and December for the five latest years are given in Table 2. The very sharp fall in the January counts reflects the return to what, for recent years, must be regarded as more usual numbers of Tufted Duck and Pochard on the reservoirs. The regular monthly counts and the records from the Lower Thames probably account for all but an insignificant proportion of the ducks in the London Area with the major exception of Mallard. It is a matter of guesswork as to how many Mallard there may be, but in some recent years there have been at least 1,500 on the Thames above Teddington. If one allows another 2,000 for the many park lakes never counted, the total winter wildfowl population in the London Area, excluding Feral Canada and Greylag Geese, is currently probably of the order of 16,000 to 18,000.

Table 2. Approximate aggregate totals of census counts and Lower Thames counts in January and December 1981.

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Dec</i>
1977	10,000	8,000
1978	8,000	11,000
1979	23,000	18,000
1980	21,000	13,000
1981	14,000	12,000

64 Wigeon

1981/82. See Table 1. The mean count increased for the second season running but was still well below the peak reached in the cold winter of 1978/79.

1981. Large counts at principal localities are given. Numbers were generally low in the early months of the year but there was a marked influx in the second half of December and especially in the cold weather at the end of the month. Elsewhere reported in parties of generally less than 20 in many localities up to Apr. 18th and from Aug. 31st, but a drake stayed at Staines Res., until May 8th, another was at Moorhall G.P. (M) on July 29th, and a pair were at Wraysbury G.P. on Aug. 14th.

- E Girling Res., 40 on Dec. 16th. Fisher's Green G.P., 90 on Dec. 28th. Rainham Marsh, 70 on Dec. 26th.
- H In December max. of 25 at Amwell G.P., and Hilfield Park Res.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., 35 on Dec. 12th. Kempton and Stain Hill Res., 90 in January and 60 in November. King George VI Res., 98 on Jan. 18th and 360 on Dec. 28th. Queen Mary Res., 60 on Jan. 24th and 65 on Dec. 12th. Staines Moor, 150 on Dec. 22nd. Staines Res., c. 95 January to Mar. 1st and 100 on Dec. 12th. Wraysbury Res., 75 on Dec. 20th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 42 on Dec. 13th.
- K Dartford Marsh, increased from 27 on Dec. 26th to 300+ on 28th.
- S Barn Elms Res., 38 on Dec. 28th. Walton Res., 100 on Dec. 18th. Thorpe Water Park, 70 on Jan. 18th.

67 Gadwall

1981/82. See Table 1. The rapid increase which, after a long period of stability, commenced in 1979/80 continued to another new peak. In four seasons the mean count has increased by 91%.

1981. Summer records and maxima for the principal waters are given. This year no breeding was reported but record winter counts were received from Queen Mary Res., and Richmond Park. Free-flying birds continued to be present throughout the year at St. James's Park (Inner London).

- E Walthamstow Res., 19 and King George V Res., 20, both in December.
- H A pair summered at Stocker's Lake, but breeding was not reported. Cheshunt G.P., 55 in November and 65 in December. Rye Meads S.F., 40 in December.
- M Brent Res., a pair on June 6th and a female on June 27th; winter maxima there were 21 in February and 20 in December. Perry Oaks S.F., a pair on May 21st, the female staying until June 7th. Queen Mary Res., 102 in January and 57 in December. Harefield Moor G.P., 16 in January and 33 in December. Wraysbury Res., 40+ in November. Denham Studios G.P., 19 in January. Kempton and Stain Hill Res., 66 in October.
- B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, 56 in January and 24 in December. Old Slade N.R., 54 in November. Wraysbury G.P., 29 in December.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one or two stayed into June; a maximum of 16 in December.
- S Barn Elms Res., 37 in January and 51 in December. Richmond Park 70 in October and 88 in November. Island Barn Res., 27 in December. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 20 in February and 31 in December. Thorpe Water Park, maximum of 52 in January. Walton Res., 50 in November and 40 in December.

1980 Additional Record

- S Thorpe Water Park, 32 in November and 52 in December.

69 Teal

1981/82. See Table 1. Numbers were unremarkable, continuing the decline of recent seasons but at a more modest level.

1981. In contrast to 1980 there were no spring records after April. Maxima for the principal localities are given.

- E Monthly maxima for Rainham Marsh were: January—2,500 (on 1st, but declining to 1,500 two days later), February—700, March—350, April—10, August—300, September—500, October—400, November—2,000, December—1,500.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 115 in December, Rye Meads S.F., 200 in February and 100 in October.
- M King George VI Res., 201 in January and 194 in December. Staines Res., 70 in February. Kempton and Stain Hill Res., 58 in February. Inner London: Regent's Park, one flew over on Dec. 14th and two drakes the next day (TD).
- B Old Slade N.R., 51 in December. Wraysbury G.P., 94 in January and 46 in December.
- K Dartford Marsh, 85 in December. Sevenoaks G.P., 66 in January.

- S Barn Elms Res., 400 in January when one basin was drained, declining to 220 in February when it was refilled; 160 in December. Island Barn Res., 138 in January and 126 in December. Hersham S.F., 200 in December. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 205 in January and 390 in November. Holmethorpe S.P., 156 in December.

70 Mallard

1981/82. See Table 1. The change in the mean count was not significant, numbers remaining very similar to those of the two previous seasons.

1981. Not surprisingly this species is grossly under-recorded, apart from the monthly wildfowl counts in winter, no records at all were received for the Essex or Bucks. sectors. That it remains an abundant species is illustrated by the record from New River Walk (M) given below; otherwise counts of 300 or more are given. The largest breeding concentration reported this year was only 15 broods.

- E Girling Res., 370 on Jan 18th.
 H Cheshunt G.P., 335 in February and 300 in December.
 M Harefield Moor G.P., 350 in February and 700 in December. New River Walk, NI., 211 on Nov. 2nd (CA), as the observer commented, this was a "remarkable number for a ditch". Inner London: Regent's Park, 690 on Jan. 22nd.
 K Littlebrook G.P., 300+ in August and 400+ in September.
 S No count received exceeded 200.

72 Pintail

Records of up to four birds were received from 14 well-scattered localities; larger counts are summarized.

- E Rainham, monthly maxima; January—100, February—30, March—12, October—4, November—50, December—80.
 M Kempton Park Res., 25 flew SW on Sept. 26th (HRG).
 K Northfleet, 54 flew W on Oct. 24th (LFW). Dartford Marsh, 37 on Dec. 27th (DRG).
 S Hogsmill S.F., eight flew over on Jan. 18th (SWG, SDBWS).

73 Garganey

- E Netherhall G.P., one on July 18th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, two on July 29th and Aug. 4th (MKD). Girling Res., two on Aug. 8th (PJV).
 H Stanstead Abbots G.P., a drake on May 12th and two female/immatures on July 12th (AA,HPM). Rye Meads S.F., a female/immature from July 18th to 25th (GJW).
 M Staines Res., a drake on May 9th and 10th (MJR *et al.*). Perry Oaks S.F., a female on July 6th (PCt) and one on Aug. 30th and 31st (JAH,PN *et al.*). Kempton Park Res., five on Aug. 11th of which three were drakes (HRG). Brent Res., one on Aug. 16th and 22nd (LAB).
 K Ruxley G.P., a pair of Apr. 4th (RTk,SJG).

1980 Additional Record

- B Wraysbury G.P., one on July 29th and Aug. 9th (JPPW).

74 Blue-winged Teal

- S Barn Elms Res., a drake from Feb. 16th to 19th (WR, RBH *et al.*). Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the first record for the London Area. Despite the fact that this bird arrived with an influx of Teal, there will always be a lingering doubt that it was of captive origin.

75 Shoveler

1981/82. See Table 1. The mean count reached a new peak with the remarkable total of 946 being counted in November. This may be compared with the total winter population in the British Isles in the early 1970s of no more than 8,000-10,000. The present total winter population is not yet known, but if these numbers are maintained the London Area will clearly be of great importance for this species in a national context.

1981. Large counts and summer records are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., two pairs summered but no young were seen; 266 in November.
- H Maple Cross S.F., 20 on June 25th. Stocker's Lake, 120 in February.
- M King George VI Res., 124 in March; 462 on Aug. 31st and then consistently between c. 300 and 400 to Nov. 22nd. Staines Res., 110 in September. Queen Mary Res., 100 in December. Kempton and Stain Hill Res., 284 in January. Brent Res., a drake on June 27th and 100 on Sept. 12th was a record count for the locality. Perry Oaks S.F., up to six drakes in mid-June. Inner London: Regent's Park, 20 on Feb. 24th and up to 21 from Oct. 28th to Nov. 28th. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, 44 on Jan. 18th; up to 12 in November, and a maximum of 31 on the Long Water on Dec. 9th. St. James's Park, 24 on Mar. 2nd and up to 15 in early October.
- B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, 144 in January and 150 in December. Tilehouse North G.P., 88 in December.
- K No counts in excess of 12 received from this sector.
- S Barn Elms Res., 138 in February, a drake on June 4th, and 101 in December; Lonsdale Road Res., 86 in November. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 290 in February and 140 in November.

1980 Additional Record

- S Lonsdale Road Res., 86 on Oct. 24th.

76 Red-crested Pochard

The status of this species is confused by the occurrence of birds originating from the Royal Parks and other collections, but it is possible that some records are of truly wild birds.

- E Snaresbrook, a female on Jan. 1st and 18th, Feb. 21st and Oct. 10th (RLn, MJA). Walthamstow Res., singles on Mar. 20th, Sept. 8th, Oct. 10th and Dec. 13th and 27th (CA, GBs, PJV). King George V Res., a drake on Dec. 19th and 22nd (JF, CFn).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Dec. 30th (RMRG).
- M Shepperton G.P., a drake on Jan. 28th and 29th (HWE); Stain Hill Res., a drake on Aug. 22nd (AVM, PN); Kempton Park, one on Sept. 13th (DP). Staines Res., a duck from Sept. 22nd to 29th and from Oct. 24th to 25th (mo).

- B Wraysbury G.P., a drake on Feb. 1st (AVM); Old Slade N.R., a duck on Nov. 11th (GAR).
 S Barn Elms Res., a female on Jan. 23rd and two on Nov. 10th (PEB,CB,PJSn). Barnes Pond, a pair on Apr. 2nd and May 22nd and 23rd (RBH). Kew Gardens, at least two full winged males during both winter periods (RBH,ADT). Lonsdale Road Res., a female on Jan. 24th, another from July 15th to 20th (PEB). Richmond Park, a female on Nov. 8th.

77 Pochard

1981/82. See Table 1. In contrast to Tufted Duck, the mean count increased markedly, and excluding the exceptional numbers present in 1979/80 was at its highest level since 1974/75.

1981. Large counts and breeding records are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., 118 on July 6th; 18 broods hatched, 290 in December. Berwick Ponds, one brood.
 H Stocker's Lake, 130 in February; eight pairs summered of which two bred.
 M Staines Res., c. 500 in January and February and 1,100 in December. Harefield Moor G.P., 200 in November. Queen Mary G.P., 200 in September. Kempton and Stain Hill Res., 247 in October. One pair bred at Alexandra Park, Brent Res. and Harefield Moor G.P. Up to five drakes and two ducks summered at Osterley Park but no young seen. Inner London: Regent's Park, ten pairs bred. St. James's Park, three broods.
 B Wraysbury G.P., 188 in September.
 K Littlebrook G.P., 130 in August.
 S Barn Elms Res., 130 in February and 159 in December. Thorpe Water Park, 246 in October. At Kew Gardens eggs were laid, but they were taken and the young raised by the bird-keeper.

78 Ring-necked Duck

- H Amwell G.P., a drake from Apr. 14th to May 14th, and again on May 25th and 26th (FCB,JF,RA *et al.*).

This record has been accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, and is the fifth for the London Area this century.

79 Ferruginous Duck

Once again it is necessary to give a warning regarding the close similarity of certain *Aythya* hybrids to this species; observers submitting records are asked to pay particular attention in their description to the extent of black on the bill tip.

The following records are probably of escaped birds, but the possibility of truly wild individuals occurring cannot be ruled out.

- E Little Britain Lake, a drake present on Jan. 2nd, Feb. 14th and Oct. 4th and 11th was thought to have been the same bird seen here in previous years (GB,CIB,IGJ,JE,RFT).
 S Barn Elms Res., a male present from Feb. 11th to Mar. 2nd, then May 17th to 20th and on Nov. 9th (PEB,RBH,JPPW,WR *et al.*), also a male at Lonsdale Road Res. on Jan. 3rd and July 9th is considered to be the same bird. Tooting Bec Common Road, a drake on Jan. 5th and 6th (FWL).

1980 Correction

- S The drake seen at Lonsdale Road Res. on Nov. 2nd is now considered to have been a hybrid.

80 Tufted Duck

1981/82. See Table 1. In spite of the cold winter the mean count fell by over 20% from that of the previous season. It has been lower in only two seasons out of the past thirteen.

1981. The number of breeding sites and minimum number of broods reported were as follows:

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Inner London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	Total
1980 broods	50	64	30	19	—	1	12	176
sites	8	6	10	2	—	1	7	34
1981 broods	55	54	27	28	2	7	10	183
sites	8	3	12	2	2	1	7	35

As usual, the vagaries of recording distort comparisons, notably for Inner London where no records were received for 1980 from Regent's Park (15 in 1981). Eliminating records from this locality numbers were marginally higher than in 1980. The largest concentration was at Walthamstow Res., 47 broods and apart from Regent's Park and Rye Meads S.F., with 46, the only other locality where more than ten broods were reported was St. James's Park with 13 broods. The larger counts in each sector were:

- E King George V Res., 1,100 in January and September. Walthamstow Res., 920 in February, 1,180 during the moult at the end of July and 820 in December.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 290 in January and December. Rye Meads S.F., 612 on Dec. 19th, a record count for the locality.
- M Queen Mary Res., 1,250 in January, 700 on Aug. 3rd., 1,150 in September and 850 in November. Staines Res., 1,150 on July 26th and 500 on Dec. 13th; Harefield Moor G.P., 550 on Aug. 22nd and 830 in November. Shepperton G.P., 520 in November and December. Inner London: St. James's Park, 350 in February.
- B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, 700 in December. Wraysbury G.P., 1,070 in February and 1,340 in September.
- K No counts received in excess of 140.
- S Barn Elms Res., 480 in February and 520+ in December. Walton Res., 400-450 in January, August and September. Thorpe Water Park, 450 in February, 525 in October and 487 in November.

81 Scaup

The usual warning must be given regarding certain *Aythya* hybrids which can closely resemble this species.

- E Girling Res., a drake on Oct. 10th (JF). King George V Res., a female on Dec. 12th (JF). Walthamstow Res., a male on Jan. 30th (PFR), a female on Dec. 18th, 23rd and 30th (CA,PFR). Rainham, a female on the River Thames on Dec. 26th (MKD).
- H Amwell G.P., a female from Nov. 14th to Dec. 19th—was also seen at Rye Meads S.F.—and then two until Dec. 31st, one remaining into 1982 (BR *et al.*). Troy Mill G.P., a drake from Apr. 4th to 7th (JE), this was probably the same bird present at Hilfield Park Res. from Apr. 15th to May 13th (CIB).

- S Holmethorpe S.P., a female from Mar. 22nd to Apr. 26th (DPC,RWHS). Barn Elms Res., a drake on Dec. 22nd (PEB).

82 Eider

- E Netherhall G.P., a female from Feb. 27th to Mar. 8th (MCe,LVPG *et al.*).
K Sevenoaks G.P., a drake on Apr. 26th and 27th (AHH).

86 Long-tailed Duck

- M Staines Res., an immature drake from Apr. 12th to May 11th (JAH,PN *et al.*).
S Walton Res., a duck from Jan. 18th (JJB) to Mar. 19th (mo), was the bird first seen on Island Barn Res. in December 1980.

87 Common Scoter

- E Walthamstow/King George V Res., a duck on Apr. 6th was joined by a drake on the 9th, both remained until May 2nd (PFR,JF,PJV *et al.*); King George V Res., a female on Apr. 19th and a pair on the 26th (JF,PJV); a flock of 23, all females or immatures, stayed for four hours on Nov. 15th (PRy *et al.*).
H Helicon G.P., a drake on May 11th (JE,CIB,RRD).
M Staines Res., two drakes and a duck on Apr. 5th (GCG); an immature drake from Apr. 24th to May 1st (GAR,MJR *et al.*). Wraysbury Res., a drake on Aug. 29th (AVM,PN).
K Erith, a pair on the River Thames on Jan. 4th (RR-G).
S Barn Elms Res., a female from Apr. 27th to May 1st (RBH,WR).

89 Velvet Scoter

- B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, a female from Dec. 25th was still present into January 1982 (FRC *et al.*).

91 Goldeneye

1981/82. See Table 1. The peak count was a record, but occurring in March it probably represented passage birds. Both the January and February counts, however, also exceeded the previous highest numbers.

1981. Large counts from each sector are given. Widely recorded in small numbers elsewhere.

- E King George V/Girling Res., 50 in February, 52 in March and 42 in December. Five stayed until May 2nd and there were three on July 11th.
H Stocker's Lake, 15 in February. Troy Mill G.P., 20 in December.
M Queen Mary Res., 90 to 95 in January and February, 72 in March and 62 in November. Staines Res., 33 in February and 35 in March, 22 in December. King George VI Res., one stayed until May 4th; 59 on Dec. 28th. Harefield Moor G.P., 20+ in December.
B Wraysbury G.P., 18 to 20 January and March and 11 in December.
S Walton Res., 36 in February and March and 28 in December.

93 Smew

1981/82. See Table 1. The return to double figures in the index was no doubt a reflection of the cold winter, but it was still less than half the number that occurred in the previous cold winter of 1978/79.

1981. All records are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., a redhead on Dec. 21st and up to four from 23rd to 31st.
- H Helicon G.P., a redhead on Dec. 24th. Stocker's Lake, a drake on Feb. 25th. Troy Mill G.P., a redhead on Dec. 31st.
- M King George VI Res., one on Feb. 15th. Staines Res., one to three (one drake) from Jan. 18th to Mar. 22nd; a redhead on Dec. 16th and a drake on Dec. 30th and 31st. Queen Mary Res., a redhead from Jan. 11th to 24th, three (one drake) on 28th and then a drake and a redhead to Feb. 8th. Harefield Moor G.P., singles on Feb. 21st and Dec. 26th. Shepperton G.P., three on Jan. 18th and 28th and one on Feb. 15th. Brent Res., a redhead on two dates in January and two dates in March. Stoke Newington Res., up to three (one drake) in January and a redhead on Feb. 14th and 15th; a redhead from Dec. 12th and a drake on Dec. 19th and 29th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., up to two each of redheads and drakes (but no more than two together at any time) from Jan. 2nd to Feb. 14th. In December up to three drakes and three redheads (max. six at one time) from 20th to 31st.
- K Littlebrook G.P., one on Mar. 1st. Sevenoaks G.P., one from Jan. 2nd to 30th and two from Dec. 28th to 31st.
- S Thorpe Water Park, a redhead on Mar. 18th. Walton Res., a redhead on Jan. 19th.

1980 Additional Record

- M Stoke Newington Res., two females on Mar. 1st and a male on Dec. 28th.

94 Red-breasted Merganser

- E King George V Res., a pair on Apr. 19th (JF).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., three flew S on Nov. 14th (HPM).
- M A female at Staines Res. from Feb. 1st to 15th (PCT, GCG, HJF, *et al.*) and from Apr. 23rd to 28th (JAS *et al.*) was then seen at Bedfont G.P. on Apr. 29th (RGG). Wood Green Res., one from Dec. 18th to 23rd (NBn *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., a female on Feb. 14th (CIB).
- K On Dec. 28th, a female was seen at Crayford Ness (GBC) and two drakes flew down river at Dartford (PA).

95 Goosander

1981/82. See Table 1. In contrast to Smew, the peak count for this species was not far short of the level reached in 1978/79.

1981. Large counts or maxima at principal localities are given.

- E King George V/Girling Res., 35 in February and 80 in December.
- H Rye Meads S.F., 13 flew over on Dec. 27th.
- M King George VI Res., 43 in January. Staines Res., 50 in February and 22 in December. Wraysbury Res., 17 in February. Queen Mary Res., 73 in January and 22 in December.

- B Farlowe's Lake, Iver, 35 in January. Wraysbury G.P., 52 in January and 24 in December.
 S Island Barn Res., 37 in February and 18 in December. Walton Res., 47 in March.

96 Ruddy Duck

The main feral breeding area of this species is in Avon and the West Midlands, but it is now regularly reported from the London Area in small numbers, and following confirmed breeding in 1980, observers are asked to look out for further broods.

- E Fisher's Green, a female on Jan. 17th (GJW).
 H Hilfield Park Res., two on Apr. 2nd, one on May 4th, and one on Nov. 8th and 10th (CIB,HNHS). Stocker's Lake, a female on Sept. 27th and a male on Dec. 6th (RAP). Troy Mill G.P., a female on Dec. 31st (JDn).
 M Stain Hill Res., present in most months, with a maximum of 22 on Feb. 14th (DP). Queen Mary Res., a duck on Jan. 28th (HWE). Staines Res., three drakes on Mar. 14th (MJW), two ducks on Dec. 13th and 26th (APG,DJM). Harefield Moor G.P., a pair on May 3rd (JKA,CIB). Stoke Newington Res., a duck on Dec. 20th and 25th (NBn).
 B Old Slade N.R., one on Feb. 1st (MTNHS). Wraysbury G.P., a drake on Dec. 20th (RJCe,EEG).
 S Walton Res., present from January to March, with a maximum of 17 on Feb. 15th (DGn,CO).; six on Dec. 13th and 18th (DGn,CO,JRB,JJB). Island Barn Res., a female on Mar. 1st (DP). Barn Elms Res., a female on Dec. 30th and 31st (PEB).

1980 Additional Record

- B Wraysbury G.P., two on Sept. 10th (JPPW).

97 Honey Buzzard

- E Romford, one on May 24th (DSn).
 H Rye Meads S.F., one flew N on the same date as the Essex bird (GJW).
 M Queen Mary Res., one arrived from the N and departed to the S on Oct. 4th (JAH,PN).
 S Beddington S.F., one flew SE on Oct. 11th (DH).

Four records in one year is unprecedented in the London Area. Doubtless the Essex and Herts. records refer to the same individual. The total for the London Area this century now stands at 12.

99 Red Kite

- E Aveley, one on Apr. 29th (CFn).
 M Inner London: Regent's Park, one circled and flew off NW mobbed by crows on May 7th (TD).

The third year in succession that this species has occurred and the first record for Inner London this century. These two take the total for the London Area to ten.

103 Marsh Harrier

- E Rainham Marsh, a female/immature from Aug. 17th to Sept. 14th (NI *per* MKD). Waltham Abbey, a female/immature on July 26th (JD).
 K High Elms G.C., an immature on Aug. 2nd (DT).

Three in one year is a return to better numbers after the sole record last year. Spring records are very exceptional.

104 Hen Harrier

- E Rainham Marsh, a single bird present from Jan. 1st to Mar. 15th and two there on Mar. 7th. Also present from Nov. 8th to the end of the year with two birds seen on four dates in November from the 9th and on five dates in December (DSB, MKD *et al.*).
 H Rye Meads S.F., a 'ring-tail' on Dec. 16th (WGL).
 K Dartford Marsh, a single 'ring-tail' from Dec. 17th to 20th with two on Dec. 26th (PA, SC). Northfleet, a 'ring-tail' flew over on Dec. 23rd (SLW).
 S Beddington S.F., a 'ring-tail' flew NE on Nov. 29th (DH, GDM).

108 Sparrowhawk

It is now 20 years since the decline of the Sparrowhawk was first documented in the 1961 *London Bird Report*, subsequent reports have charted the progress and setbacks of the recovery. In that year and the next only one pair bred and even then Surrey was the stronghold producing almost half of the Area's yearly total of records. In 1963 only two possible breeding records were reported and there were only 32 sight records. Numbers reached their lowest ebb in 1964 with no attempted breeding noted and only half of the 1963 sight records reported, and none at all from Essex and Kent. 1965 produced a slight increase in records but there were still no breeding birds, the next year was a little better with one, possibly two, pairs nesting. In 1967 the recovery was noted as continuing at a slow rate and one pair bred this time in Kent, and in 1968 another lone pair bred in Surrey. Surprisingly, considering the paucity of records both before and after the crash Essex produced the nesting record for 1969 though disastrously this was robbed by vandals. Another reversion occurred in 1970 with no breeding records and a drop in the number of sightings, though things were to improve greatly the next year with two pairs nesting successfully in Surrey; these were to be the beginning of a small breeding nucleus in the coming years. However, a further relapse occurred in 1972 when no breeding was attempted and there was a total absence of records from Essex and Middlesex. The next year saw two pairs breed in Surrey but numbers in general were still low. By 1974 the Surrey nucleus was beginning to grow and at least three pairs bred, two years later this had increased to nine pairs, one of the big advances of the comeback, though numbers in Kent were still low and non-existent in Essex. In 1977 sightings multiplied by nearly threefold those of 1974 and north of the River Thames birds were seen regularly. Since then the story of recovery has gone from strength to strength through there is still no consistent breeding outside Surrey. Odd pairs have summered in Herts. and Bucks. and one pair bred in Kent last year, 1980.

Once again these reported numbers of pairs are unlikely to reflect the true breeding status of the Kestrel in the London Area. However, the above numbers—the lowest ever—must now be the cause of some alarm. The total of pairs proved and possible has been steadily falling since the days of greatest density in 1967 when 111 pairs were reported. Since then observer coverage has not decreased to the same extent and a true reduction in numbers is therefore apparent. There are individual county totals where varying yearly figures do not convey a consistent feeling of accuracy, Herts. for instance has returned totals of nil in 1974 and 1976, three in 1977 and 1978 and as many as ten and 12 in 1975 and 1980 respectively. By contrast with the exception of Surrey, other individual county totals vary by only 3 or 4 each year, a more consistent pattern. Inner London too has suffered from the diminishing return with only four pairs reported for the second year in succession yet birds are still as plentiful in the centre of the capital as when eight pairs bred (in 1977). A complete survey is undoubtedly the only way we shall discover the true picture; however in the meantime, observers are asked to be alert to Kestrels in the breeding season, reports should ideally indicate display, nest building, food carrying, recently fledged young etc., all clues that indicate the presence of breeding birds. One alarming modern tendency has come to London, an Essex pair had four young stolen from the nest doubtless for financial gain or the pet trade.

All Inner London breeding season records are given below:

Houses of Parliament/GLC building/Waterloo Station/St. Thomas's Hospital area, one pair present from February to December (PJS*n*). Islington N1., one pair bred in church tower (TG). Old Oak Common, one pair bred on gasometer (PEB). Redcliffe Square, SW 10, one pair raised two young on St. Luke's church (BE). Regent's Park, one pair raised three young (TD). St. Dunstan's church, EC3, one pair (DAB).

118 Merlin

- E Rainham Marsh, a single on Dec. 19th and the same bird on Dec. 30th (MKD).
- K Foots Cray Meadows, a female/immature on Oct. 24th (SJG). Petts Wood, a female on Mar. 15th (TJT).

A good showing, though more records containing descriptions would increase this number and give a better indication of the species' true status.

119 Hobby

All records are given, singles unless otherwise stated.

- E Berwick Ponds, Apr. 11th (MKD). King George V Res., July 26th (PJV, AJGy). North Weald, Sept. 1st (IM). Rainham Marsh, Sept. 2nd (JW). Romford, one on Aug. 14th (MKD). Waltham Abbey, May 23rd and 25th (KM, CF*n*).
- H Batchworth Lake, June 16th (HB). Hatfield Park, Aug. 15th (HNHS). Hilfield Park Res., May 8th (CIB). Lea Valley (Amwell, Rye Meads, Broxbourne G.P., Stanstead Abbots G.P.), one from July 4th to Sept. 27th and an immature from Aug. 30th to September 7th (GJW *et al.*). Panshanger, a pair displaying on June 4th (HNHS). South Mimms, a pair present in June (HNHS). Stocker's Lake, Aug. 25th (RDNHS).

- M Harefield Fisheries, July 16th, Harefield Village, Aug 23rd (RDNHS). Kempton Park Res., single birds on May 23rd, 30th, Aug. 14th and Sept. 12th (HRG). King George VI Res., two chasing martins on Aug. 9th (JH*t*). Mill Hill, two on Aug. 24th (WAH). Perry Oaks S.F., one flew S on Sept. 17th (JAS). Queen Mary Res., May 3rd, Sept. 6th, 16th and 19th (PC*t*,PN,AVM,HRG). Staines Res., four dates in May from the 2nd and two on Aug. 17th (MJR,JAH,DJM).
- B Wraysbury G.P., Oct. 4th (EEG).
- K Petts Wood, an immature bird on the extremely early date of July 18th (TJT).
- S Ashted Common, June 5th (JJB). Beddington S.F., one flew NW on Apr. 26th and single birds were seen heading S on Aug. 29th and 31st (AV,GDM,JH*t*). Ewell, May 24th (RBH,AVM,PN). Holmethorpe S.P., one hunting on May 8th and 11th (DPC,RS). Kew Gardens, two flew E on Sept. 15th (RBH).

As in 1980 a good number of records with birds showing a preferential interest for one or two areas. It is three years now since confirmed breeding was recorded in the London Area. Whilst it is still possible that unreported breeding still continues in the Area it seems certain from the number of mid-summer records that birds nest not far outside. There is an unusual scarcity of records from the former stronghold of the Surrey commons.

129 Red-legged Partridge

Distribution of pairs in the breeding season and large counts are given.

- E Beckton, two pairs. Berwick Ponds, three pairs. Fairlop, five pairs. Fisher's Green, one pair. Girling Res., one pair. Harold Wood, one pair. Havering, eight pairs. North Weald, two pairs. Ongar, three pairs. Rainham, three pairs. Roding Valley, five pairs. Fairlop, 17 on Jan. 25th.
- H Croxley Moor, one pair. Hilfield Park Res., at least one pair. Rye Meads S.F., one pair. Watford, one pair. Symondshyde, nine on Dec. 27th.
- M Cranford G.P., one pair. Osterley Park, six from Nov. 2nd to the end of the year.
- K Badgers Mount, eight on Dec. 9th. Crockenhill, eight on Oct. 25th. Dartford Marsh, one in July, six in December.
- S Earlswood, one pair. Godstone Res. N.R., recorded in nine months of the year. Woldingham, High Drive, two on roadside verge in thick snow on Dec. 24th.

Generally under-reported.

130 Grey Partridge

Breeding season localities (one pair unless otherwise stated) and coveys of over five are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, two pairs. Epping, 'common', Havering, two pairs. Rainham Marsh, three pairs. Thorndon Park, one pair. Wanstead, one pair. Hornchurch, one on Sept. 9th. Rainham Marsh, 12 on Dec. 12th.

- M Bushey Park, Harefield Moor G.P., Hampton Court Park, three pairs. Hatton Cross, Hayes, at least three pairs. Perry Oaks S.F., Osterley Park, at least 14 pairs. Shepperton G.P., West Bedfont. Hampton Court Park, 22 on Jan. 10th. Perry Oaks S.F., five in October and November.
- K Dartford Marsh, two in July, seven in October and 31 on Dec. 5th. Bromley Common, eight in December. Littlebrook, five on Mar. 1st.
- S Ashtead, Godstone Res. N.R., Hersham G.P., Park Down, Slyfield. Walton Down, 17 on Mar. 21st.

133 Pheasant

No significant change in the population from the few records received. Interesting records came from Osterley Park where breeding was reported with at least 15 females present and Kew Gardens where a maximum of 10 were seen on Jan. 29th.

136 Water Rail

In contrast to last year well reported and a return to the numbers of former years. Not unexpectedly there were no breeding records received and only a thorough survey will establish the birds' true status in the Area. Most records came from the end of the year—particularly late December—and this was largely due to the onset of severe weather and the freezing over of streams, ponds, ditches and dykes. All sites of winter occurrences are given (singles unless otherwise stated).

- E Berwick Ponds (4), Dagnam Park, Fisher's Green (5), Ockenden, Rainham Marsh, Walthamstow Marsh, Walthamstow Reservoir, Romford, one found dead on Nov. 14th (MKD).
- H Amwell G.P. (2), Cassiobury Park (2), Cheshunt G.P. (6), Croxley Hall G.P., Maple Cross S.F., Rye Meads S.F. (5), Stocker's Lake (3), Tolpits Lake, Watford—River Colne (2), West Hyde.
- M Brent Res. (4), Bedfont G.P., Harefield Moor G.P. (2), Kempton Park Res. (2), Queen Mary G.P. (2), Ruislip L.N.R. (2), Springwell Lake and Watercress beds, Staines Moor.
- B Old Slade N.R., Wraysbury G.P., three in January and two in December.
- K Crayfordness, Dartford Marsh, Foots Cray Meadows (3), Petts Wood, Ruxley G.P. (3), Sevenoaks G.P.
- S Ashtead Common, Barn Elms Res., Beddington S.F. (2), Bletchingley, Epsom Common, Fetcham Mill Pond, Hersham S.F. (2), Hogsmill S.F., Holmethorpe S.P. (3), Island Barn Reservoir.

137 Spotted Crake

- S Beddington S.F., one present from Aug. 15th to Aug. 29th (SWG, DH, SM *et al.*) and again from Sept. 12th to Oct. 3rd (DH, JH*t*). Clearly, it is possible that these records refer to the same individual that remained undetected for two weeks in early September.

The third year in succession that birds have appeared in the Area.

142 Moorhen

Large counts and Inner London breeding records are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, 40 in December. Sewardstone, 45 in December. Waltham Abbey, 42 in November.
- H Maple Cross S.F., 150 in February. Stocker's Lake, 56 in November.
- M Harefield Grand Union Canal, 53 in December. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, two pairs bred (DAB). New River Walk, N1, one pair bred (TG). St. James's Park, bred successfully (PJO). Regent's Park, 64 in January.
- K Littlebrook G.P., 30+ from September to November. Sevenoaks G.P., 26 in November.
- S Beddington S.F., 70 in October.

145 Coot

Large counts are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., 470 in January, 420 in February, and between 460 and 660 from August to December.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 450 in October. Try Mill G.P., 420 in December.
- M Shepperton G.P., 1,350 in January, 1,040 in February, 1,190 in November and 1,400 in December. Harefield Moor G.P., 500 in March. Kempton/Stain Hill Res., 840 in January and 630 in October.
- B Tilehouse G.P., 500 in December, Wraysbury G.P., 970 in January and between 650 and 690 in September and October.
- S Richmond Park, 406 on Nov. 28th was a record count for the locality. Thorpe Water Park, 822 in January and 490 in December. Walton Res., 500 in January and 460 to 540 from September to November.

1980 Additional Record

- S Thorpe Water Park, 586 in November and 721 in December.

151 Oystercatcher

- E Epping Forest, one on Aug. 9th (EFCC). Fisher's Green, one on Dec. 28th (GJW). King George V Res., singles on Mar. 8th (EFG) and May 9th (CFn); two on Aug. 8th (GJW). Netherhall G.P., one on Aug 9th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, two in April and May (MKD), and on July 19th but no evidence of nesting, singles on Aug. 2nd and 23rd (NJI). Thurrock, seven in May (MKD). Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 22nd, two on May 24th and one on Dec. 30th (CAI, R-C, RLn).
- H Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 25th (CIB). Rye Meads S.F., one on June 14th (RMRG). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Dec. 26th (SB). Troy Mill G.P., one on Mar. 15th (IGJ).
- M Barn Hill, Wembley, one flew NW on Aug. 9th (LAB). Edmonton S.F., one on Dec. 30th (RJCe). Queen Mary Res., one on Mar. 31st (MJR).
- S Barn Elms Res., one flying up river on Oct. 21st (JPPW) and two on Dec. 18th (PEB). Beddington S.F., one on Aug. 9th (GDM). Holmethorpe S.P., one on Sept. 6th (CJF). Inner London: River Thames, Westminster, one flew downstream on Sept. 2nd (PJSn).

153 Avocet

- E Rainham Marsh, singles on June 14th and 21st (NJI).
- H Hilfield Park Res., two on June 2nd (BG).

158 Little Ringed Plover

All breeding records together with large counts of migrants are given.

- E A total of 15 pairs were present at five sites; one pair at each of these bred successfully. Rainham Marsh, another good autumn passage with maxima of 50 on July 29th and 55 on Aug. 14th (MKD).
- H Eight out of nine pairs at three sites bred. Rye Meads S.F., 15 on Aug. 1st (GJW).
- M Ten pairs were present at four sites of which six pairs bred. The eggs of a pair at a fifth site were stolen. Peak counts of migrants at Perry Oaks S.F., were 32 on July 5th (PN) and 25+ on July 26th (AVM,PN); Edmonton S.F., 15 on July 13th (GJW).
- B Two pairs bred at one site.
- K Three to seven birds present during April, May and June at one site and one pair at another site.
- S One pair bred and another probably bred at one site; one pair bred at a second site.

159 Ringed Plover

All breeding records, together with large counts of migrants and winter records are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, one pair probably bred. Rainham Marsh, six pairs present in breeding season, some of which were successful. Recorded in all months except June. Winter counts of 100 on Feb. 3rd, 120 on Nov. 14th and 200 on Dec. 26th were exceptional (MKD). The main return passage in autumn was observed from mid-July to mid-September with a maximum of 200 on Aug. 16th (MKD,NI).
- H Amwell G.P., one pair bred (GJW).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., two pairs bred (PN,JAS). Ponders End G.P., three pairs present in April, one pair laid eggs but no apparent success (GJW). The main spring passage was recorded at Perry Oaks S.F., from early May until the end of the month, with maxima of 39 on 8th and 45 on 21st; the main autumn migrants occurred in August with peak counts of 24 on 2nd and 28 on 22nd continuing throughout September with a maximum of 17 on Sept. 12th (mo). Inner London: Hyde Park, one flew over the Serpentine on June 1st (DAB).
- B Wraysbury G.P., two pairs bred (RRG).
- K Broadness, Swanscombe, three pairs holding territory on May 4th (GBC). Dartford Marsh, 32 on Dec. 28th (PA).
- S Beddington S.F., a maximum of four on May 7th and three on two dates in August and September (mo).

161 Kentish Plover

- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 19th (JAS).

The 17th record for the London Area this century and the fourth year in succession that one has appeared.

165 Golden Plover

- E Barking, two on Apr. 19th (KBt). Bulpham Fen, 15 on Feb. 21st (MJA). Epping, 12 on Jan. 17th (SNC). Fairlop, 200 on Jan. 25th (MKD). Hainault, 70 on Oct. 17th (BDS). Havering, a peak of 230 on Jan. 17th (DSB), and other maxima of 150 on Jan. 5th and 100 on Feb. 7th (MKD). King George V Res., one on Dec. 19th. Netherhall G.P., one on Dec. 12th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, ten on Jan. 1st.

- H Amwell G.P., 13 flew E on Dec. 28th (GJW). Rye Meads S.F., six on Dec. 8th and one on Dec. 28th (RMRG). Symondshyde, 240 on Mar. 20th; c. 160 on Nov. 21st and 115 on Dec. 31st (HNHS).
- M Highway Farm, Harefield, 29 on Dec. 28th (RDNHS). London Airport, maximum of 11 on Dec. 27th (JAS). Staines Moor, in January maxima of 65 on the 4th, 60 on the 11th and 82 on the 14th; in February, 54 on the 11th and 55 on the 21st (mo).
- K Dartford Marsh, two on Dec. 26th and seven on Dec. 28th (PA,SC).
- S Beddington S.F., one from Jan. 25th to 27th, another on Apr. 14th, seven on Dec. 27th and six the next day (GDM,DH,AT).

166 Grey Plover

- E Rainham Marsh, singles on Oct. 16th and Oct. 18th (PK) and two on Dec. 19th (MKD). West Thurrock, one on Sept. 5th (MKD).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 17th (PCt,JAH). Staines Res., four flew S on May 12th (JAS) and singles on May 15th (PN) and Oct. 25th (KFB).
- K Crayfordness, one on Dec. 28th (GBC). Dartford Marsh, two on Dec. 18th and 28th (PA,SC).
- S Beddington S.F., two on DEC. 28th with the Lapwing flock which also included six Golden Plover (AT).

169 Lapwing

The first winter period was relatively mild and there were no unusual cold weather movements. The largest flock present at this time was 2,000 at Old Slade N.R. on Jan. 2nd. There were several other flocks including those at Rainham and West Hyde G.P. of between 600 and 850. Records of successful nesting were received for at least 70 pairs in Essex, Herts., Middx. and Surrey. The highest concentration was c. 20 pairs at Highway Farm, Harefield. The usual mid-summer migration and build up of flocks of non or post-breeding birds was first noted on June 21st with a total of 160 W in $\frac{3}{4}$ hour over Chislehurst. On the 26th there were 100 at Sevenoaks G.P., this had increased to 150 by mid-July and 155 by August. Hard weather movements were a feature of the second winter period with many small flocks moving W and SW in November and December. The largest flocks at this time were 1,026 at West Hyde G.P. on Nov. 8th, 1,000 at Sevenoaks G.P. and 2,000 at Rainham on Dec. 12th.

170 Knot

- E King George V Res., one on Dec. 26th (PJV). Rainham Marsh, one on Aug. 14th and three on Sept. 12th (MKD).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., singles on May 2nd (JE), Aug. 13th (CIB) and Sept. 26th (IGJ); two from Sept. 15th to 22nd (JAH *et al.*). Queen Mary Res., two flew NE on Aug. 9th (AVM,PN). Staines Res., three on Sept. 13th (PCt) and two on Dec. 30th (DJM).

171 Sanderling

- E King George V Res., one on May 8th (PJV). Walthamstow Res., one on July 25th (JF).
- M King George VI Res., one on Dec. 12th (AVM,PN). Perry Oaks S.F., single from May 2nd to 4th (JE *et al.*); three on May 23rd (PCt,AVM). Staines Res., singles on Apr. 27th; May 1st (JAM) and 30th (PN) with two on May 16th (AVM).

175 Little Stint

- E Rainham Marsh, maxima of 30 on Sept. 12th, 20 on Sept. 19th and 29th, 18 on Sept. 26th and one to twelve on various dates from July 11th to Dec. 12th (MKD,DSB *et al.*). West Thurrock, three on Sept. 19th (MKD).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., singles on several dates from Aug. 8th to Sept. 6th, then increasing from Sept. 12th with between 21 and 24 present from Sept. 17th and 26th (JAH,JAS *et al.*). Rammey Marsh, two on Sept. 2nd and 19th (GJW). Ponders End S.F., two on Oct. 17th (GJW).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Nov. 6th (AHH).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 8th (PEB,RBH). Beddington S.F., up to five on five dates between Sept. 5th and 27th (DH,GDM,DAC *et al.*). Hershams S.F., one on Aug. 30th (CRAC).

176 Temminck's Stint

- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 29th (JAS).
- S Beddington S.F., one on May 7th was moulting into summer plumage (SWG,DH,GDM).

A fairly typical showing, prior to 1976 autumn records were more usual, since then twice as many have occurred in spring.

180 Pectoral Sandpiper

- E Rainham Marsh, one present from Sept. 28th to 30th (possibly present on 26th) and again on Oct. 3rd (MKD,JMH).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one present from Sept. 15th to 22nd (JAH,PN,JAS *et al.*) and a different individual on Sept. 26th and 27th (PCt,IGJ,DJM).

All three records are within the period of peak occurrence, late August to early October. The total for the London Area is now 24 this century.

182 Curlew Sandpiper

- E Rainham Marsh, eight on Sept. 12th (MKD) and up to four on nine dates from Aug. 30th to Sept. 25th. West Thurrock, three on Aug. 30th (MKD,PJV).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., three on May 30th (SB).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., two from May 29th to 31st (AVM,PN,JAS); 11 on Sept. 15th (JAS), seven from Sept. 16th to 20th (PN) and up to three on five other dates.
- S Holmethorpe S.P., one on May 24th (JCW).

183 Purple Sandpiper

- E King George V Res., one on Aug. 18th (NW).

184 Dunlin

On the Lower Thames, very few records were received and all records are given. The counts at the beginning of the year were 300 to 400 at Barking on Feb. 12th, 45 at Dartford Marsh on Jan. 10th and 530 at West Thurrock on Feb. 7th. At the end of the year records received were for December only with c. 300 at Crayfordness on 28th, c. 490 and c. 700 at Dartford Marsh on 26th and 28th respectively. At Rainham Marsh (away from the Thames) records

were submitted for all months of the year with peak counts of 1,200 in January, 1,000 in February and 1,500 in November. At inland sites the highest count was of 51 on flooded land at Hersham (S) on Dec. 5th. Records were submitted for all months at Perry Oaks S.F., with peak counts of 36 in January and 31 in November.

187 Buff-breasted Sandpiper

M Perry Oaks S.F., one from Sept. 12th to 25th (AVM,PN *et al.*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee. The third London Area record during the present century, and the main attraction amongst a very good selection of waders at Perry Oaks S.F. in mid-September.

188 Ruff

Two sites, Rainham Marsh in Essex, and the Staines area in Middlesex/Bucks., held the main wintering and passage flocks during the year. Other records were mostly of small numbers in spring and autumn, and a small movement during the severe weather of December.

E Netherhall, one on July 27th. West Thurrock, four on Feb. 7th, singles on Aug. 30th and Sept. 6th. Rainham Marsh, peak monthly counts are shown in the following table.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
43	35	12	2	1	—	20	50	25	12	—	26

M Kempton East Res., one on Mar. 26th, Rammey Marsh, present between July 8th and Sept. 14th, maximum of four on July 31st, and Aug. 14th to 19th.

M/B In the Staines area, most records came from Perry Oaks S.F., although there were other records from Wraysbury G.P., Staines Moor, and nearby reservoirs. Peak monthly counts for this area are summarized as follows.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
24	24	4	2	2	—	1	11	16	3	22	2

K Dartford Marsh, two on Dec. 5th, and one on Dec. 18th.

S Beddington S.F., one on June 28th, and present between Aug. 2nd and Sept. 12th, peak of six on Aug. 6th; two on Dec. 19th. Field Common, Hersham, two on Dec. 18th. Hersham S.F., two on Dec. 19th. Thorpe Water Park, five on Feb. 15th.

189 Jack Snipe

At the beginning of the year, reported from 26 sites until Apr. 19th, with no more than three birds at any one locality. Present from Oct. 2nd to the end of the year, at 17 sites, and particularly widespread during the freezing conditions in December. Highest counts during the year were Brent Res., five on Dec. 27th (LAB), Dartford Marsh, four or five in December (PA,SC), Swanscombe Marsh, seven on Dec. 31st (BMU), Beddington S.F., four on Nov. 22nd (DH,GDM) and Dec. 13th (DH), and Hersham S.F., 11 on Nov. 28th (JRB).

190 Snipe

Breeding season records, the largest winter counts, and an Inner London record are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, Rainham, one drumming during April; 30 on Dec. 13th. Epping S.F., 70 in November. Harold Wood, 36 on Mar. 4th. Hornchurch, 20-30 during January and February. Rainham Marsh, drumming observed in April; 100 on Oct. 2nd.
- H Broxbourne, drumming in April and May. Croxley Moor, one displaying on May 20th. Moor Lane, Rickmansworth, maximum of 115 on Jan. 25th and Mar. 14th, with birds seen displaying during the summer months. Panshanger, drumming seen during April.
- M Highway Farm, Harefield, a pair present on May 25th, drumming seen. Kempton Park, c. 60 on Mar. 7th. Perry Oaks S.F., 37 on Feb. 1st. Ramme Marsh, 35 on Mar. 12th. Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Dec. 13th.
- B Old Slade N.R., 86 on Oct. 11th.
- K Dartford Marsh, 94 on Dec. 27th. Erith Marsh, 30 on Dec. 22nd. Sevenoaks G.P., 68 on Nov. 1st.
- S Beddington S.F., 100 on Nov. 22nd. Hersham S.F., c. 100 on Nov. 24th. Hogsmill S.F., c. 30 on Nov. 30th.

194 Woodcock

Records away from breeding localities are shown in the following table.

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Sept</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Sightings	7	11	5	1	1	2	6	47
Total birds	9	13	8	1	1	2	6	51

It is clear from the above that there was a considerable influx into the Area, following heavy snowfalls and freezing conditions in December. The largest numbers seen together were six at Berwick Ponds, Rainham on Dec. 19th (MKD), and five at Bromley Common and Darenth, both on Dec. 28th (GD, DRG). Inner London: one flew against an office window in Hackney Road, Bethnal Green on Nov. 9th (RP), singles in Kensington Gardens on Apr. 3rd and in Hyde Park on Dec. 3rd (DAB), and singles were in Regent's Park on Dec. 15th (SB) and Surrey Docks on Dec. 31st (LSF).

In the breeding season, birds were seen at the following localities (maximum number of birds in brackets).

- E Epping Forest (1).
- H Bishop's Wood (1). Broxbourne Woods (3). Northaw Great Wood (2). Panshanger (1). Symondshyde (3).
- M Ruislip local Nature Reserve (1).
- K Westerham Wood (3).
- S Ashted Common (2). Bookham Common (2). Chessington (1). Headley Heath (3). Juniper Top (1). Oxshott (1). Prince's Coverts (1). Walton Heath (2).

195 Black-tailed Godwit

- E Rainham Marsh, one on July 19th (NJI). Walthamstow Res., one found dead on Apr. 21st (PRr).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 8th, was seen the following day on Staines Moor (AVM,PN). Ramme Marsh, one from Aug. 9th to 11th (GJW).
- S Beddington S.F., four flew N on Apr. 4th (DH,GDM), and one flew S on Apr. 16th (DH).

196 Bar-tailed Godwit

- E King George V Res., four flew NE on May 7th (PJV *et al.*). Rainham Marsh, one on Apr. 24th (MKD), six on Apr. 26th (DSB), and two on Dec. 12th (MKD). Walthamstow Res., one on Apr. 27th (PFR).
- H Amwell G.P., one flew N on Sept. 4th (BR).
- M King George VI Res., one flew W on Sept. 13th (PN). Staines Res, one on May 7th (MJR), and seven flew NE on May 10th (JAH,MJR).
- K Northfleet, eight flew W on Sept. 7th (LFW). Sevenoaks G.P., singles on Apr. 19th and 26th (AHH).
- S Epsom, a flock of 24 flew WSW on Aug. 9th (WHD).

198 Whimbrel

Spring movements were noted between Apr. 9th and May 11th, and in autumn from July 11th to Aug. 30th. The August flock of 75 in Kent is unprecedented in the London Area.

- E Childerditch, four on Apr. 26th (EBWPS). Netherhall G.P., one on Aug. 9th (GJW). King George V Res., one on May 7th, three on May 10th, two on July 26th, and one on Aug. 9th (PJC*r*,PJV). Rainham Marsh, three on May 2nd, singles on May 9th, July 11th, 26th and 29th (MKD). Walthamstow Res., singles on Apr. 25th (REH), Aug. 1st (CA), ten on Aug. 30th (LG) and two on Sept. 9th (AJGy).
- H Broxbourne G.P., one flew S on Aug. 9th (GJW). Hilfield Park Res., one flew E on Apr. 15th (CIB). Rye Meads, one on Apr. 26th and two flew S on Aug. 9th (RMRG,GJW).
- M Ashford, five flew NW on Aug. 6th (MJW). Queen Mary Res., singles on May 5th, 9th and July 29th (WM,HRG). Staines Res., one on Apr. 28th and May 5th (MJR), four the next day (GAR), and singles on May 8th, 9th, 11th, July 20th, 31st, and Aug. 9th (JH*t*,MJR,CWW *et al.*). Uxbridge, one calling at 22.00 hrs. on Aug. 4th (JAH).West Ruislip, one heard at 23.20 hrs. on Apr. 16th (JE). Inner London: Regent's Park, one on May 1st (TD).
- K Broadness, one on May 4th (GBC). Northfleet, a flock of 75 flew N on Aug. 5th, and one on Aug. 31st (LFW,SLW). Orpington, two flew W on Aug. 25th (RT*k*,BB). Sevenoaks G.P., one on May 1st (AHH).
- S Beddington S.F., two flew S on Aug. 29th (DH,GDM).

199 Curlew

Records for the year are summarized in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sightings	1	1	2	5	2	3	8	10	4	-	1	11
Total birds	6	1	2	9	2	4	10	51	6	-	1	36

The general pattern of occurrence remained similar to previous years, with a small movement in April, and a much larger one in autumn, with August being the peak month. The largest flocks seen were 19 flying NNW over Staines Res. on Aug. 23rd (CWW), and 10 flying SW over Queen Mary Res. on Aug. 29th (MJR). A cold weather movement, though on a relatively small scale, was evident between Dec. 12th and 26th. Flocks of up to seven were seen during this period. The only Inner London record during the year was of two flying over Regent's Park on June 19th (TD).

201 Spotted Redshank

- E King George V Res., one on Aug. 15th (PJV *et al.*). Rainham Marsh, singles on May 2nd (MKD), June 29th, July 5th (NJI), and July 29th, and then regularly between Aug. 12th and 30th (mo), maximum of four on Aug. 14th, 15th, and 22nd (DSB,PJV), and two on Sept. 12th (MKD).
- H Stocker's Lake, two on Sept. 23rd (RRD).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., two from Aug. 7th to 9th, three on Aug. 17th and 18th, two on 19th, one on 22nd and 24th, and two on Sept. 3rd (PCt,AVM,PN,JAS *et al.*). Staines Res., one on Aug. 9th (PCt).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., singles on July 9th and July 30th (AHH).
- S Beddington S.F., singles on Aug. 29th and from Sept. 12th to 16th (DAC,GDM,JHt *et al.*).

202 Redshank

Breeding season records, the largest counts, and an Inner London record are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, two pairs probably bred. Chingford, a pair nested but no young seen. Waltham Abbey, one pair attempted to breed but were unsuccessful. West Thurrock, two pairs bred. Rainham Marsh, eight pairs bred. Outside the breeding season, the highest counts were alongside the River Thames, where the maximum monthly counts were as follows.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marsh	25	30	30	20	—	75	80	70
Thurrock	—	—	230	—	45	170	—	—

- H Records from eight localities, mostly one or two birds, all but one in either March or April.
- M Highway Farm, Harefield, up to four displaying but did not appear to breed. In the Staines area, many birds displaying from March to June but no evidence of breeding obtained. Peak monthly counts from Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor and the south-western reservoirs are shown in the table below.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
7	6	16	11	12	6	2	1	—	7	4

- B One or two at three localities in January and from March to June.
- K Broadness, a pair in May. Dartford Marsh, three pairs probably bred. Highest counts from this site were 65 on Jan. 10th and 55 on Dec. 5th. Erith Marsh, c. 80 on Feb. 23rd.
- S Highest counts from this sector were four at Barn Elms Res. on Dec. 18th and 30th. Inner London: Surrey Docks, seven on Dec. 31st.

204 Greenshank

Reported in spring between Apr. 15th and May 30th, mostly single birds, and in autumn from July 1st to Oct. 18th, with no exceptional numbers occurring. Spring records are given, together with the largest counts in autumn.

- E King George V Res., nine or ten on Aug. 23rd and nine on Sept. 12th. Rainham Marsh, two on Apr. 15th, and singles on May 9th and 30th; peak autumn count of 17 on Aug. 12th and Aug. 30th.
- H Sandy Lodge, one on Apr. 26th. Reported from seven sites in autumn, maximum of three at Amwell G.P. on Aug. 22nd.

- M Perry Oaks S.F./Staines Res., one or two on 11 dates between Apr. 20th and May 25th. Ponders End S.F., two on Apr. 26th. Stoke Newington Res., one on Apr. 25th. In autumn, maximum counts of seven at Rammey Marsh on July 14th, and Wraysbury Res. on Aug. 30th.
- B Horton G.P., one on May 7th. Singles in autumn at Horton G.P., Old Slade N.R., and Wraysbury G.P., with two at the Queen Mother Res., Datchet, on Oct. 4th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., two on May 14th, and one or two on many dates from July to September.
- S Surbiton, one heard on May 3rd. Maximum autumn counts at Beddington S.F. of eight on Aug. 16th and 24th, and at Barn Elms Res., three on Aug. 12th and 17th.

1980 Additional Record

- B Wraysbury G.P., one on July 2nd, and five on July 20th.

208 Green Sandpiper

More widespread as a winter visitor than the Common Sandpiper, with records from 11 sites during January and February, and from 17 sites in November and December. There were very few spring records received. The first seen on return passage was at Old Slade N.R. on June 20th, with the main movements as usual in July and August. Peak counts during the year are given under counties below.

- E Rainham Marsh, 32 on Aug. 22nd.
- H Rye Meads S.F., seven on Aug. 30th. St. Albans G.P., nine on Aug. 13th.
- M Perry Oaks S.F., seven on Aug. 12th and 24th. Rammey Marsh, 18 on Aug. 3rd.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., nine on Aug. 24th.
- S Beddington S.F., five on Apr. 19th and up to six in July and August. Hogsmill S.F., seven on Aug. 8th. Holmethorpe S.P., up to seven in December.

209 Wood Sandpiper

- E Rainham Marsh, present on 13 dates between July 31st and Sept. 19th (mo), maximum of three on Aug. 22nd (PJV) and Sept 4th (DSB *et al.*).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on July 13th, three on Aug. 13th (JAS), and then single(s) almost daily between Aug. 30th and Sept. 13th (mo). Rammey Marsh, singles on July 31st, Aug. 7th, and Aug. 9th (GJW).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 12th and 17th (AHH).
- S Beddington S.F., one on July 25th (DH,GDM,AV), and on most dates between Aug. 6th and 19th, maximum of five on Aug. 14th (PJS*n*), and then further singles on Aug. 23rd, 24th, Aug. 29th to Sept. 6th, and Sept. 13th (mo).

211 Common Sandpiper

In the first two months of the year, wintering birds were present at four localities, all singles apart from two at Rainham Marsh. Singles were present in June at Old Slade N.R. on 19th, at Sevenoaks G.P. on 22nd until the end of the month, and at Walthamstow Res. on June 30th. Very widespread during the peak passage months of July

and August, with lower numbers in September and October. Records in November and December were from six localities, again mostly singles, but there were four at Perry Oaks S.F. on Nov. 8th and two in the Staines area in December. Spring passage was first noted at several sites by mid-March, followed by the usual small movements in April and May.

The largest counts in spring and autumn, a ringing recovery, and a summary of Inner London records are given below.

- E Lea Valley Reservoirs, 40 on July 27th. Rainham Marsh, 50 on July 29th and Aug. 8th. Walthamstow Res., eight on May 6th and 10+ on Sept. 16th.
- H Rye Meads S.F., 10 on July 18th, Oct. 14th and 23rd. Stanstead Abbots G.P., up to 10 in August.
- M Edmonton S.F., 17 on July 27th. King George VI Res., seven on May 2nd, 15 on Aug. 23rd. Perry Oaks S.F., six on May 8th, 43 on Aug. 1st. Queen Mary Res., 11 on Aug. 10th. A bird trapped here as a juvenile on Sept. 4th 1979 was retrapped at the same site on Aug. 3rd 1981. Rammey Marsh, 20 on July 28th. Inner London: Hyde Park, two on Apr. 28th and one the next day; Kensington Gardens, one on Aug. 22nd. Regent's Park, singles almost daily from Apr. 30th to May 13th, and one or two on many dates from Aug. 10th to Oct. 6th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 22 on Aug. 21st.
- S Barn Elms Res., six on May 10th and 11th. Beddington S.F., 25 on Aug. 9th.

213 Turnstone

- E King George V Res., one on May 6th (PJV *et al.*). Nazeing G.P., one on Sept. 5th (TA). Rainham Marsh, two on May 2nd (MKD), and one on Aug. 22nd (NJI).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Dec. 26th (GJW).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 1st and 2nd (P*C*t, AVM, PN), and from Sept. 17th to 26th (JAH, PN, JAS *et al.*). Queen Mary Res., two on July 21st (MJR). Staines Res., singles on Apr. 26th, 30th, and May 1st, two on May 2nd, one on 8th and two on May 9th (mo), and in autumn, three on Aug. 10th (DJM). Stanwell Moor G.P., one on Aug. 1st (IPW).
- K Broadness, one on May 4th (GBC). Dartford Marsh, one on Dec. 28th (PA, SC). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 27th (AHH).
- S Barn Elms Res., singles on Apr. 27th and 28th (PEB), and May 7th (JPPW). Beddington S.F., two on Aug. 8th (GDM).

215 Red-necked Phalarope

- E King George V Res., one from Sept. 26th to Oct. 2nd (RSr, PJV *et al.*).

The presence of this bird, in company with a Grey Phalarope for the last three days of its stay, gave many observers a unique opportunity to study the two species together at close quarters. The ninth London Area record this century, and the second from this site.

216 Grey Phalarope

- E King George V Res., one from Sept. 30th to Oct. 4th (JF, RSr, PJV *et al.*). Rainham Marsh, one from Sept. 28th to Oct. 6th (MKD, JMH, BO *et al.*).

M Staines Res., one from Apr. 26th to May 1st (FRC,CWW *et al.*). Queen Mary Res., one on Sept. 24th (GAR), and a different bird from Oct. 8th to 11th (OLC,HWE *et al.*). Wraysbury Res., one from Sept. 27th to 30th (CJH,JAH,DJM).

S Barn Elms Res., one on Sept. 24th and 25th (RBH,JPPW *et al.*). Island Barn Res., one on Oct. 11th and 13th (M. Lawford *per* DP).

A very good year for this species in the London Area, with the first ever spring record of a bird in almost complete breeding plumage at Staines Res., followed by a marked influx in late September and early October of seven birds (assuming no duplication) between Sept. 24th and Oct. 13th. (See photograph opposite p. 64.)

218 Arctic Skua

H Potters Bar, an immature flew NW on Sept. 27th (JPW).

M Queen Mary Res., a light-phase adult flew E on Aug. 29th and a juvenile flew W on Aug. 31st (AVM,PN).

A poor showing, but all on typical dates.

222 Mediterranean Gull

All birds mentioned are full adults unless otherwise specified.

M Staines Res., one on Oct. 18th (KFB,PCt).

B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, one on Feb. 22nd (RBH,AVM).

S Barn Elms Res., one on Nov. 10th (PEB). Carshalton Pond, one on Feb. 26th (364 days after the last one at this spot) and on Dec. 5th (DAC). Epsom Common, the bird remaining from 1980 was present until Jan. 18th (WHD *et al.*), but it failed to return for its sixth winter. Thames Ditton, a first-winter bird on Nov. 3rd (PM).

Whilst the total for the London Area stands at 41 this century, it is certainly tempting to think, especially with adults, that several wandering birds form the nucleus for repeated observations.

225 Little Gull

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	-	83	53	-	6	54	30	23	13	-

A continuing resurgence for this dainty and diminutive gull. A total of 262 bird/days (tabulated above) involving a minimum of 11 birds, with approximately 50% in each season. In terms of numbers the best year ever in London. As in 1980 the SW of the Area held the greatest numbers. Only records for principal localities are given and these are summarized.

Spring passage began on Apr. 2nd and lasted until May 29th, with maxima of six at King George V Res. on Apr. 26th, 11 on May 7th (JF,GJW *et al.*), seven on Barn Elms Res. the same day (PEB,RBH *et al.*), and eight on several dates in April at Staines Res. (MJR *et al.*).

An adult visited several localities in the Staines area between July 13th and 29th (JAS,MJR,CWW). Autumn passage lasted from Aug. 19th to Nov. 21st with maxima of ten on Aug. 14th and 11 on Sept. 2nd at Queen Mary Res. (DJM,MJR), however only one bird was seen at this locality after Sept. 13th, but passage at the adjacent Staines Res., was marked in October and lasted well into November, unusually late for this species. No counts exceeded four at Staines Res. during the autumn.

228 Black-headed Gull

All counts of over 2,000 are given, several peaks noticed at certain localities and two sightings of leucistic birds. In addition details are given of a breeding record, possibly successful, the first for 17 years (1964), and a ringing recovery.

- E Fairlop, 3,000 on Dec. 31st; King George V Res., 4,000 on Apr. 6th; Rainham Marsh, 5,000 in January and February, 3,000 in November and 6,000 in December; West Thurrock, 2,000 on Nov. 27th.
- H Cole Green Lane, c. 3,000 on Dec. 31st. Hilfield Park Res., 15,000 on Nov. 8th.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., c. 2,000 on Jan. 10th. Perry Oaks S.F., one pair sitting between May 30th and June 20th, but not seen subsequently and the outcome is not known. Queen Mary Res., c. 25,000 on Mar. 14th, an adult found dead on Feb. 1st had been ringed in Finland in July 1978. Inner London: a partial albino in Hyde Park on Sept. 29th.
- K Blackheath, a leucistic bird on Mar. 10th. Dartford Marsh, 2,000 on Dec. 26th. Sevenoaks G.P., 2,000 in January and December. River Thames, 10,000 on a 12 mile stretch between Woolwich and Greenhithe on Jan. 4th.
- S Holmethorpe S.P., 10,000 on Dec. 25th.

233 Common Gull

Fewer records received than in recent years, only one record between Apr. 29th and Aug. 3rd, no exceptional counts, and only slight evidence of a rather reduced spring passage this year.

Selected counts and summaries of spring passage are given.

- E King George V Res., 1,500 on Apr. 6th. Rainham, 700 on Dec. 23rd.
- H Hilfield Park Res., c. 2,000 on Nov. 8th.
- M Perry Oaks S.F., passage peaked in early March with maximum of 95 on the 8th, but numbers were low. 250 on Queen Mary Res. on Mar. 14th were highest elsewhere.
- S Barn Elms Res., passage peaked on Mar. 31st with 70, earlier than 1979 or 1980. River Thames at Kew, a sharp peak of 80 on Apr. 6th, but numbers were sustained only briefly.

234 Lesser Black-backed Gull

No real pattern was discernible from this year's records, and passage counts were lower than usual.

A ringing recovery and peak counts are given.

- E King George V Res., a bird found dead on Sept. 12th had been ringed at Stirling, Scotland in April 1981.
- H Hilfield Park Res., c. 600 on Nov. 8th.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., up to 500 in November and 300 in December. Queen Mary Res., c. 1,000 on Sept. 9th. Wraysbury Res., c. 300 on Aug. 29th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., a peak of 280 in September.

235 Herring Gull

Observers' attention is drawn to the problems associated with sightings of yellow-legged birds and are referred to *Lond. Bird Rep.* 44:48.

Only one count of over 1,000 was received and that was at Harefield Moor G.P., with 2,000 on Nov. 21st. Two pairs bred successfully, one at the Lords Cricket Ground, and another at St. James's Park, one adult of the latter pair had yellow legs.

Sightings of yellow-legged birds were recorded as follows, all concern single birds: Barn Elms Res., in December; Girling Res., on Nov. 8th; River Thames at Kew on Feb. 12th, which had only one yellow leg (the other was missing!), and at Westminster between July and November; Sevenoaks G.P., on July 17th; Thurrock on Sept. 19th; Wandsworth on Oct. 17th, and finally at Wraysbury Res., on Aug. 29th.

237 Glaucous Gull

A return to more normal numbers.

- E Girling Res., singles on Jan. 2nd (GBs) and Oct. 31st (JF). Rainham, one on Feb. 21st (MKD). All were first-winter birds.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., singles on Dec. 6th and 13th (AHH).

238 Great Black-backed Gull

Counts again peaked in January and December, although totals were unremarkable.

Selected counts are given.

- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., 220 on Dec. 22nd.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., 100 on Jan. 17th and 200+ on Dec. 28th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 100 on Dec. 23rd.
- S Holmethorpe S.P., c. 150 on Jan. 1st and 400 on Dec. 25th. Inner London: River Thames at Waterloo, numbers reached a peak of 14 on Jan. 12th.

240 Kittiwake

An interesting set of records, an approximate total of 40 birds were seen, only nine of which occurred outside the period late April to early May, which was a time of cold weather, strong NE winds and also many other stormblown seabirds.

All records are given, but due to long stays of many birds those at localities are summarized. All records are of adults unless otherwise specified.

- E Girling Res., one on Feb. 15th, which was oiled, and three on Mar. 14th (JF *et al.*). King George V Res., one on Apr. 22nd increasing to ten (three of which were immatures) on Apr. 27th, also birds seen on May 1st and 2nd (one) and May 4th (two) were considered to be separate from the main influx (GBs, JF, PJV *et al.*). Rainham Marsh, an immature on Apr. 26th (NJI).
- H Hilfield Park Res., two on Apr. 26th, one between Apr. 27th and 29th and two on Apr. 30th and May 1st (CIB, AVM).
- M Harefield Moor G.P., an immature between May 2nd and 4th (RRD *et al.*). Queen Mary Res., one on Feb. 14th was found dead on Feb. 19th (CIB, PCt), four, including an immature, on Apr. 28th rose to a peak of ten on May 1st, one remaining to May 5th (JE, MJR), these were almost certainly the Staines birds, and finally one flew W on Aug. 8th (MJR). Staines Res., an immature on Mar. 20th (JAS), four on Apr. 26th increased to a maximum of 14, including an immature on Apr. 27th, the last birds were seen on May 1st (HJF, RBH *et al.*).

- B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, one on Apr. 28th (GAR).
 K Northfleet, an immature on Oct. 26th (LFW). Erith, one on Jan. 4th (RR-G).

245 Sandwich Tern

- E Hornchurch, two flew over on Aug. 23rd (MKD). King George V Res., one on Apr. 26th and 27th (WGL,GJW) and five on Sept. 16th (PRy). Rainham, one on July 29th and two on Aug. 12th (MKD,KBt). Walthamstow Res., one on Apr. 29th (PFr).
 H Amwell G.P., two on June 6th (BR).
 M Downe Barns Farm, Ruislip, three flew NW on July 3rd (RDNHS), Harefield Moor G.P., two on Apr. 26th (JE). Staines Res., two on Apr. 27th, one remaining until May 1st (JAH,AVM,PN), three flew SSE on May 13th (GAR). Wood Green Res., four flew NE on May 9th (DPy).
 B Old Slade N.R., one on May 15th (NS). Wraysbury G.P., one flew W on May 4th (AVM,PN).
 K River Thames at Woolwich, two on Sept. 10th (PJSn). Ruxley, two flew N on June 21st (RTk,SJG).
 S Barn Elms Res., two on Apr. 26th (PEB,SBr), six on Apr. 27th, two on Apr. 28th and one remaining until May 2nd (RBH *et al.*). Hogsmill S.F., three flew W on Sept. 15th (SDBWS). New Malden, three flew NW on July 29th (PCt). Walton-on-Thames, two flew SW on Aug. 22nd (CO).

247 Common Tern

Breeding records are given. Passage records are summarized under 247/8. In 1981 between 47 and 52 pairs reared 100 young, the highest total of birds yet reared in one year in the London Area.

- E One site held two summering pairs but they failed to breed.
 H One site held 35 to 40 pairs which raised at least 85 young.
 M Four pairs nested at one site and hatched six young, but none survived, a second site held two pairs which reared five young and a third site had two prospecting pairs which failed to make any nesting attempt.
 B One pair reared three young at one site and a second site had five pairs which reared seven young. At the latter site at least one egg was taken by a Coot.

247/8 Common/Arctic Tern

Passage records of Common Terns are summarized here, together with unspecified observations of Common/Arctic Terns.

Spring passage again began early with the first bird appearing on Apr. 6th at King George V Res., and another nearby on Apr. 8th. Apart from isolated peaks of 11 at Staines on Apr. 14th and 51 on Apr. 20th, numbers remained low until the second week of May. Then on May 9th 25 were at Amwell and Staines Res. held 14, which rose to 50 on May 11th when there was a widespread influx of 22 at Hilfield Park Res., 14 at Queen Mary Res., 11 at Sevenoaks G.P., and 17 at Troy Mill G.P.

Undoubtedly a quiet autumn with passage well below average. West Thurrock as usual provided the main attraction with numbers rarely falling below 50 throughout the period, the peak counts were 100+ on Aug. 22nd and Sept. 5th. Sept. 10th was a day of widespread but apparently rather abrupt passage with 118+ at Queen Mary Res. (but see under Arctic Tern), 150 at Northfleet flew high to the SW and 47 were at Barking. Three days later 35+ flew over Wallington (S). Apart from these, flocks rarely rose into double figures, there were however more October reports than usual.

- S Inner London: River Thames at Southwark, nine on July 22nd and two on Aug. 3rd.

248 Arctic Tern

The now predictable spring passage of this species was again widely noted. Their appearance usually coincides with northerly winds, and the sight of these graceful terns often in exceptional numbers and in rather bleak conditions remains a positive delight.

All localities are given but records from the major localities are summarized. A table below shows the total of birds present on each day of the major spring movement.

<i>Apr. 26th</i>	<i>Apr. 27th</i>	<i>Apr. 28th</i>	<i>Apr. 29th</i>	<i>Apr. 30th</i>	<i>May 2nd</i>	<i>May 3rd</i>	<i>May 4th</i>	<i>May 5th</i>
34	41	16	162	2	19	3	191	2

- E King George V Res., four on Apr. 27th, 30 on Apr. 29th, 28 on May 4th and one on Oct. 11th and 18th (CFn,PJV,GJW *et al.*). Rainham, one on May 2nd (MKD). West Thurrock, two on July 27th and Aug. 17th, 30 on Aug. 22nd, two on Aug. 30th, four on Sept. 5th and one on Sept. 19th (MKD).
- H Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 15th, 88 on Apr. 29th, 5 on May 2nd, 32 on May 4th and one on May 6th (CIB,AVM). Troy Mill G.P., two on Apr. 24th and seven on Apr. 26th (RRD,JE).
- M Harefield Moor G.P., two on Apr. 26th (JE). Queen Mary Res., 12 on Apr. 29th and one on Oct. 20th (GAR,MJR), however, of a flock of 118+ terns on Sept. 10th, 50 to 60% were considered by the observer (MJR) to have been Arctic. Staines Res., present almost continually from Apr. 13th to May 9th and involved maxima of 28 on Apr. 20th, 29 on Apr. 27th, 27 on Apr. 29th (JAH,RBH *et al.*) and an astonishing 130 on May 4th (JE,AVM,PN), and lastly one from Oct. 24th to 29th (DJM,JAS *et al.*).
- K Woolwich, one on Sept. 10th (PJSn).
- S Barn Elms Res., present on seven dates between Apr. 26th and May 11th, with maxima of eight on Apr. 27th and five on Apr. 29th (PEB,RBH *et al.*).

251 Little Tern

- E King George V Res., five on May 9th (CFn). Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 9th (LC).
- H Amwell G.P., four on May 9th (JF). Troy Mill G.P., one from Apr. 28th to 30th (RRD,JE,AVM).
- M Staines Res., one on Apr. 26th (FRC).
- K Woolwich, two on Sept. 8th (PJSn).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on May 7th (PEB).

253 Black Tern

After last year's exceptional numbers, this year was quiet by comparison, records were fairly evenly divided between the east and west, and involved about 439 birds at 18 localities.

Apart from two birds on May 1st spring passage took place between May 7th and 18th, and eight localities had approximately 104 birds. Peak counts only are given. The bulk of the movement happened on May 7th when there were 17 at Barn Elms Res. (DJB, PEB *et al.*) and 49 at Staines Res. (APG), on May 8th a further 11 were at King George V Res. (PJV).

Two mid-summer records were noted, both at Queen Mary Res., with one on June 29th and six on July 9th (WM, MJR). These apart, autumn passage lasted from July 31st until Oct. 18th and 15 localities had apparently 335 birds. Totals only occasionally reached double figures. On Aug. 3rd, 15 were at Queen Mary Res. (MJR), and on Aug. 15th, West Thurrock held 40 (GCG). Sept. 11th produced 11 at King George V Res. (PJV), but Sept. 12th was clearly a better day for passage when 28 were at Barn Elms Res. (WR), 59 at Queen Mary Res. (MJR) and 20 at West Thurrock (MKD), the latter site also held 40 on Sept. 19th (PJV). The last bird was at Queen Mary Res. on Oct. 18th (PCt).

- M Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one over the Round Pond on Sept. 23rd was joined by a second on the 26th and both were seen to depart high to the SE in the early morning of the 28th (DAB). The first Inner London records since 1976.

264 Stock Dove

Bred or probably bred at 28 localities, details of these, Inner London records and large flocks are given.

- E Epping Forest, 20 pairs. Hainault, six pairs. Dagnam Park, four pairs. Rainham Marsh and Havering Park, three pairs at each. North Romford, two pairs. West Thurrock, many breeding in a chalk quarry. Single pairs present at Claybury, Berwick Ponds and Navestock. Rainham Marsh, up to 60 wintered, while 58 at Fisher's Green on Mar. 31st was the only other flock of any size.
- H Croxley Green, up to three pairs bred, and single pairs present at Cassiobury Park, Dysham Park, Hilfield Park Res. and Stocker's Lake. West Hyde, 50+ on Jan. 3rd.
- M Osterley Park, 12 pairs bred and single pairs at Bayhurst Wood and Ken Wood. The largest counts came from Harefield Moor G.P., 180 on Jan. 24th, 150 on Feb. 8th, 120 on Apr. 10th and 150 in November. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one pair present. Regent's Park, one pair present and three birds seen on July 27th.
- B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, 120 on Jan. 2nd. Horton G.P., 115 on Jan. 1st. Larbourne Farm, Iver, 130 on Nov. 4th. Wraysbury G.P., 120 on Nov. 22nd.
- K Dartford Marsh, up to three pairs bred, and the same number at Foots Cray Meadows and Lullingstone. Chevening, 160+ on Dec. 31st.
- S Caterham, three or four pairs. Wimbledon Common, Gatton Park, Kew Gardens and Purley bred or probably bred at each locality. Ashted Common, one pair. Richmond Park, a few pairs bred and 80 present on June 1st.

265 Woodpigeon

Apart from 1,000 at Walton Downs on Sept. 29th, the largest movements were during December at the onset of the severe winter. Flocks of 1,000 moved S at Berwick Ponds on Dec. 12th and 13th and 1,500 passed on the 19th, while 525 were seen heading N at Rye Meads S.F. at the same time. A flock of 775 was noted at Cranham on Dec. 31st while 800+ were present feeding in fields at Darenth on Dec. 28th. Of this flock, 350 were shot by 37 shooters engaged by the farmer because of damage to winter crops. Inner London: bred at Bow Churchyard EC4.

266 Collared Dove

Inner London: no breeding reported for the second year in succession, although a singing male was present on one date in late April at Arlington Square NW1, and three were present in Regent's Park from July 1st onwards. Hyde Park, one flew W on Oct. 6th.

Elsewhere there was no evidence of a change in breeding numbers apart from an increase in the Kingston/Surbiton area, and the probable breeding at Rainham Marsh for the first time. However in many areas the breeding population appears to have reached a plateau, and any change in status should be reported. Large flocks were a feature from September onwards, with 300 at Langley Vale on Sept. 14th, 300+ at Littlebrook G.P., on Nov. 15th, were the highest numbers ever recorded in the Area; 100 at Maple Cross S.F., on Nov. 8th, and 114 at St. Albans G.P., on Dec. 31st.

267 Turtle Dove

The first bird of the year was one at Sevenoaks G.P., on Apr. 12th, with other April records coming from Queen Mary Res., on the 18th and Wraysbury G.P., on the 27th. There were further records during the first few days of May, and most of the usual areas had birds by the end of the first week. Clearly under-recorded as a breeding species, with reports from only 20 localities. Ten pairs in Epping Forest and eight pairs along the Roding at Navestock, were by far the highest breeding concentrations reported, while at Bookham Common a decrease of over 50% was noted in territories in 96 acres of scrub grassland. Most birds had departed by the end of September, and Inner London claimed the last bird of the year, at Regent's Park on Nov. 5th. Inner London breeding season records are given.

St. James's Park and Arlington Square N1 and pairs present during the breeding season at New River Walk N1 and Holland Park.

269 Ring-necked Parakeet

This species (sometimes referred to as Rose-ringed Parakeet) has been recorded in parts of the London Area regularly since 1970. Whilst their presence is clearly the result of escapes or releases from captivity, they are evidently capable of surviving in the wild and some at least have successfully withstood severe winter conditions. It is hoped that publication of records will encourage observers to continue to report the progress of birds in areas where they are already established, to look out for birds in new localities and to send

to recorders any records not previously submitted. Further information will enable a fuller account of the species' distribution to be published in a future *LBR*.

All records are given, but those at principal localities are summarized.

- E Roding Valley, one on Apr. 13th (MKD).
 M Brent Res., one on Aug. 25th (LAB). Chiswick Park, four on Oct. 18th (JPPW). Hampstead, one on Mar. 29th and one at Hampstead Heath on Aug. 5th (PJC*r*,MN). Kempton Park, a pair from early in the year to mid-February (HRG). Osterley Park, a pair with one juvenile on June 18th (DGH). Ravenscourt Park, one on July 18th (PEB). Shepperton, two on Jan. 1st, three on Oct. 18th and five at Shepperton G.P. on Aug. 29th (HWE).
 B Wraybury G.P., one on Mar. 15th, 19th, and Apr. 12th (RRG *et al.*).
 K Bromley Common, Joyden's Wood and Park Langley, one or two present throughout the year at each locality (GD,DRG,SJG). Bexley, five on Oct. 24th (SJG). Elmstead Woods, three on Apr. 27th, Foots Cray Meadows, one present for most of the year, two on Nov. 15th, Northfleet, one on Aug. 7th, Petts Wood, a pair attempted to nest in a hole in an ash tree but success unknown (BMU,KHP). No reports received from the Beckenham roost which held up to 110 birds at the end of 1980.
 S Ashtead, five on July 14th (DP). Beddington Park, two on Jan. 25th, singles in April and two on Nov. 8th (DAC). Hersham, one on Feb. 19th (PJS*n*). Kew, singles on May 21st and in December, also up to three seen on many dates throughout the year at Kew Gardens (PG,RGH). Thorpe Water Park, one on Feb. 15th (DKJW). Wallington, two on Sept. 29th (MWRW).

271 Cuckoo

The first arrivals were singles at Holmethorpe and Bedfont on Apr. 12th (DPC,RWHS,RRG), followed by a small influx in mid-April, the main arrival occurred in the first week of May. Reported during the breeding season from over 30 localities, the majority being in Surrey and Essex. An increase in calling birds was noted at Rainham (MKD). The highest breeding concentrations were recorded at Ashtead Common five or six males, Northaw up to four males, Hainault, six males, and at Epping Forest it was described as widespread (JJB,RHK,HNHS,MKD *et al.*). Victimised nests were found at Headley Heath and Ashtead Common (RRG,WRI), and young birds were noted in several areas from early August onwards. Inner London: Aberdare Gardens, NW6, one on June 9th (DR). Kensington Gardens, one calling on May 8th (DAB). Regent's Park singles on May 20th, June 22nd and a late bird on Oct. 6th (TD). Olympia, one on July 17th (PEB).

274 Barn Owl

Only 16 records received, including two pairs, neither of which was proved to breed. This represents a substantial decline from the 23 localities and six or seven pairs in 1971. It is particularly scarce in the western half of the Area, while even in Essex and Kent reports are sporadic. All records are given.

- E Beckton, one pair, no evidence of breeding (AFW). Chingford, one one Apr. 5th and another at the Girling Res. the same day (GBs). Epping Forest, one on Nov. 21st (EFCC). Hornchurch, one roosted in a garden for most of December (*per* MKD). Ockendon, one on Jan. 29th (MJA). Waltham Abbey, one or two during the year (*per* PRy).
- H Brookman's Park, one on Oct. 15th (K Widgery *per* JPW). Radlett, one during May (HNHS). Rye Meads S.F., one on Jan. 31st (RMRG).
- M King George VI Res./Staines Res., one flew across the road between the reservoirs on Nov. 28th (CIB).
- K Darenth, single birds on Jan. 25th and Dec. 28th. Dartford Marsh, one pair seen during the year, not known to have bred. Littlebrook G.P., one or two during the year (DRG).
- S Beddington S.F., one on Jan. 29th (TJA).

279 Little Owl

Numbers in the breeding season appear to be constant, at least five pairs successfully reared young, and a further 13 pairs were present in suitable breeding sites. Recorded in another 19 localities in the breeding season, and quite widely distributed at other times of the year. It is apparently becoming more frequent in the Caterham area, but there were no Inner London records.

280 Tawny Owl

A total of 32 pairs reported of which at least 20 attempted to breed. Present at a further five localities during the breeding season and at another 26 in the rest of the year.

- E Bred or probably bred at Theydon Mount, Hainault and Havering.
- H Breeding reported from Maple Cross and Rye Meads S.F.
- M Up to five pairs at Osterley Park, and single pairs at Ken Wood, Court Park Hillingdon, RAF Uxbridge, New North Road N1 and Aberdeen Park, Highbury. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, at least one pair present throughout the year. Regent's Park, at least one pair bred. Green Park, one pair bred. Holland Park, one pair bred, three young on Apr. 11th.
- K Sundridge Park, one pair bred and up to two pairs present at High Elms, Bromley Common and Park Langley.
- S Caterham, at least four pairs bred; juveniles present at Beddington Park and Kew Gardens and single pairs at Esher and Surbiton.

281 Long-eared Owl

At least seven were present in Kent in the first winter period and up to 16 at three roosts in Essex and Kent at the onset of severe weather towards the close of the year. All records are given.

- E Locality A, four at roost on Dec. 12th. Locality B, six on Dec. 12th, and four at roost from Dec. 13th to at least the 23rd. Both roosts were in hawthorns overhanging small pools.
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Mar. 20th (WGL).
- K Dartford Marsh, up to seven in January and February and up to six in November and December (SS, TJT, PA, SC). Darenth, one on Jan. 25th (DRG).

282 Short-eared Owl

During the first winter period up to 15 individuals were present in the Area, mainly concentrated in Essex. Small numbers returned to winter from Oct. 17th, but an influx connected with severe weather, accounted for up to 20 birds in December. Many birds appeared to be frozen out of their more usual haunts, and numbers built up where local food supplies existed, e.g. Berwick Ponds. Monthly maxima; all records and summaries at the principal localities are given below.

<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
9	8	5	1	6	13	20+

- E Walthamstow Res., singles on Jan. 22nd, Mar. 28th (LVPG, JT), and from Nov. 15th to Dec. 30th (GBs, JF, CA). Nazeing Marsh, two on Feb. 7th rising to four on Feb. 17th, with one to Mar. 31st. Two on Nov. 6th. Fisher's Green, two on Nov. 15th. Nazeing G.P., two on Dec. 10th (GJW). East Ham, one on Feb. 22nd (KBT). Rainham Marsh, present from Jan. 1st to Apr. 4th with monthly maxima of six in January, three in February, two in March, and one in April. The first autumn birds were noted on Oct. 18th but numbers remained low, with two in November and three by the end of December (MKD). Berwick Ponds, five on Dec. 12th, eight on Dec. 13th, five on Dec. 19th, seven on Dec. 23rd, five on Dec. 28th, dropping to three by the year's end. The total population at this site probably reached a dozen birds, and probably included some of the Rainham Marsh birds (MKD, JW).
- H Abbots Langley, two or three on Dec. 6th. Park Street G.P., one Dec. 31st. Rye Meads, one on Oct. 24th (HNHS).
- M King George VI Res., one on Dec. 12th (AVM, PN). Brent Res., one Dec. 27th (LAB).
- B Wraysbury G.P., one on Dec. 13th was the same bird as King George VI Res., above (RRG).
- K Dartford Marsh, two in January and one from Oct. 25th to the end of the year (DRG, SSh, WTB, KHP).
- S Beddington S.F., one on Oct. 17th, increasing to two by the end of the month and early November, with one remaining until Nov. 29th (AV, SJA, DAC, GDM). Hersham S.F., two on Nov. 8th (*per* DP). Richmond Park, one flew NE on Nov. 8th (BAM). Hersham G.P., one on Oct. 24th (JHt). Mitcham Common, one on Mar. 16th (WGH).

284 Nightjar

Seven churring birds were recorded in the breeding season, all north of the River Thames; none for the second year running from the traditional sites in Surrey. All records given below, together with annual totals for the last ten years.

Pairs or churring males 1972–1981

1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
17	14	17	9	12	11	7	8	10	7

- E Ongar area, two churring on May 29th, and subsequently at least one pair held territory (MKD, IM, SNC). Last heard on Aug. 12th (LC).
- H Broxbourne, up to three churring from May 26th to July 4th (TG, HNHS, FCB, JE, SBs). Symondshyde, one on May 15th (HNHS), and two churring in July and August (SBs).

289 Swift

The main arrival took place as usual from the first week of May, although the first birds were recorded at King George V Res., on Apr. 25th and Staines Res., the day after. Sizeable concentrations were a feature of mid-May onwards, with counts of 2,000+ at Staines on May 10th, 1,000+ at Wraysbury G.P., also on the 10th, 1,000+ at King George V Res. on May 10th, increased to 3,000 by the 17th, and 1,000 at Walthamstow Res., on May 21st and June 5th.

Only one report of breeding was received from Inner London, birds seen entering the roof of a terraced house in Goldhurst Terrace NW6. Mid-summer feeding flocks were noted on several dates over central London, up to 100 in May and 200 in June feeding over Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, 170 over Waterloo Station and County Hall on July 10th, up to 100 there on July 23rd, and 100 over Lambeth Place on July 11th.

Apart from 1,000 moving over Epsom Downs on Aug. 8th few large counts were noted, as the main departure got underway in early August. A few late stragglers were reported from Surrey and Middlesex and one over Regent's Park on Oct. 5th; a late bird at Staines Moor on Oct. 25th.

291 Alpine Swift

K Orpington, one on July 26th (JRP).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee. This is the ninth record for the London Area this century, and the third in the last five years.

293 Kingfisher

About 28 pairs summered in the London Area, 18 of which were north of the River Thames. This mirrors the situation in 1971 when at least 27 pairs summered. All definite and probable breeding records are given, together with Inner London records.

E Single pairs bred at Fisher's Green, in the Roding Valley and at Navestock. Possibly bred at Walthamstow Res., Waltham Abbey and Berwick Ponds.

H Stocker's Lake, two pairs bred. Radlett one pair bred. Pairs bred at Cassiobury Park and Moor Lane.

M One pair bred in the drainpipes of Neasden High School, and one pair noted at nest site at Springwell. Pairs present at Harefield Moor G.P. and Queen Mary G.P. Inner London: Regent's Park, singles on Jan. 15th, and Oct. 1st, and two on Oct. 23rd. Kensington Gardens, one on Sept. 19th.

B Old Slade N.R., two pairs bred. Wraysbury G.P., at least one pair bred.

K Bred at Bromley Common and pairs present at Littlebrook G.P., Ruxley, and Sevenoaks G.P.

S Ham G.P., one pair bred. Kew Gardens, one pair at nest hole. Richmond Park, two prospecting, though no evidence of breeding.

297 Hoopoe

S Raynes Park, SW20, one on the late date of Nov. 11th (KEB).

A poor showing, and apart from one on Nov. 26th 1954, the latest on record in the London Area.

298 Wryneck

Two spring records and an excellent autumn passage, when even allowing for duplication, at least ten and probably up to 15 individuals were recorded. The influx of presumably Continental migrants began in the last week of August, and continued until the end of September, and was echoed by other reports at the same time in the south-east of England. All records are given.

- E Buckhurst Hill, one on Aug. 29th (JS). Epping Forest on Aug. 30th (EFCC). Romford on Sept. 1st (RPy). North Weald, one on Sept. 4th and 6th (IM).
- H Rye Meads S.F., one on May 2nd, one trapped and ringed on Aug. 29th, and one on Sept. 12th (RMRG). Broxbourne Woods, one on Aug. 31st (JD). Bedmond, near Watford, one Sept. 3rd to 14th. Croxley Green one from Sept. 16th to 27th (HNHS).
- M Singles in observers' gardens at Greenford on Sept. 4th (CAI), and Ealing the next day (DPs), one at Enfield from Sept. 6th to 11th (DS), and one at Queen Mary G.P., on Sept. 23rd (HRG).
- B Wraysbury G.P., one on Aug. 30th (RMn, per RRG).
- S Long Ditton, one feeding on the ground in St. Mary's cemetery on May 13th had a broken left leg (JET). One at Staines Lane near Chertsey in September, crashed into a patio door and was taken into care at Surrey Animal Rescue Centre, with a damaged wing. Reported (with photograph) in the *Surrey Herald* of Sept. 24th.

300 Green Woodpecker

During the breeding season, reported from well over 40 localities, nearly 50% of which were in Surrey. An increase was noted in the Epping Forest area, but at Bookham Common only one territory was found in 96 acres of grass and scrubland (three in 1979 and 1980). There were no Inner London records. An interesting record is of one flying over Rainham Marsh on Dec. 19th, obviously trying to escape the extreme weather conditions of the time.

302 Great Spotted Woodpecker

As last year, reported from well over 40 localities during the breeding season spread fairly evenly throughout the London Area. A decrease was apparent at Bookham Common with only two territories in 40 acres of oakwood (three in 1979), and one territory in 96 acres of scrub-grassland (one in 1980), but at Hainault, the population, appears to be stable at 10 pairs. One at Barnes in late December, fed on nuts put out in the observer's garden. Inner London: Holland Park, seen on several dates throughout the year, with one drumming on May 9th, a pair present in December, and two males on Jan. 22nd. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, a juvenile on June 24th; one from Aug. 5th to 27th with three on the 14th. Regent's Park, present all year, one pair bred, three young on June 22nd.

303 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

Breeding season reports came from nearly 50 localities, which is a slight increase on last year. In the majority of cases no change of status was reported, but a decrease was apparent from some parts of Surrey. At Bookham Common, no territories were recorded in either the oakwood or scrub grassland study areas, while at Wimbledon

Common numbers have also declined. Inner London: Holland Park, one on Feb. 25th, and a few records in late spring. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, one on Mar. 16th and 20th when it was seen drumming, another also drumming on May 15th (DAB). Regent's Park, a pair seen from January to April but no evidence of breeding, and one or two birds seen most months.

310 Woodlark

Following no reports last year, two records were received this, one during spring passage, and a winter record.

- E Rainham Marsh, one in song on Mar. 14th (MKD).
- K Lennox Road, Gravesend, one on Dec. 23rd, during severe weather (LFW,SLW).

311 Skylark

During the first winter period flocks exceeding 150 were reported from Berwick Ponds, Stanborough, Queen Mother Res., Datchet, Datchet Res., Bromley Common and Halstead. Numbers began to build up in November, and hard weather movements were very much in evidence by the close of the year. Peak numbers were reported from the second week of December, with some impressive counts from Kent. These records and those for Inner London are given below.

- E Maximum counts of 400+ at Rainham in December, 550 at Upminster on Dec. 25th, and 300 at Walthamstow Res. on Dec. 22nd.
- H Maple Cross S.F., 600 flew W on Dec. 12th, and a movement S at Croxley on the same date.
- M Staines Res., a SW movement on Dec. 12th with 573 in 1¼ hours. King George VI Res., 209 SW in one hour on the same date. Highway Farm, Harefield 600 passed in three flocks on Dec. 28th. Osterley Park, 400 present, after seven days snow cover in a cabbage field on Dec. 14th. The flock dispersed during mild weather, but regrouped with each snowfall. Inner London: Holland Park, five on Nov. 6th. Regent's Park, up to ten January to October, 24 on Dec. 9th, 100+ on Dec. 12th, 45 on Dec. 16th.
- K Keston, 200 on Dec. 12th and 400 at Dartford Marsh on Dec. 26th were eclipsed by movements at Erith Marsh on Dec. 22nd, at least 6,810 birds moved through, including 2,120 which landed then moved off south, in the space of 75 minutes.
- S Beddington S.F., 700 on Dec. 24th and 400 on Dec. 29th. Hersham G.P., 300 on Dec. 19th. Barn Elms Res., SW movements noted from Dec. 8th onwards.

313 Sand Martin

First arrivals were at Wraysbury G.P., on Mar. 13th, and Fisher's Green G.P., on Mar. 15th. The first main influx occurred in late March, but numbers remained low throughout the spring passage, the exception being at Staines Res., with 200 on Apr. 3rd rising to 300 on the 26th, 200 still present on May 3rd. More breeding records were forthcoming this year particularly from Essex. Netherhall G.P., 220 nests occupied, Fisher's Green G.P., 25 nests occupied; Lea Valley Res., 30 to 40 pairs bred in drain holes; Moreton G.P., 86

nests at a new site; South Stifford 100 nests, Roydon G.P., ten pairs bred. Bell Wharf, Harefield, eight nests in drainage pipes; Park Street, St. Albans, 12 nests. Also bred at Littlebrook G.P.

Return passage began in mid August, and was well under way by late September when large concentrations built up in Essex. At Rainham a feeding flock of 1,500 on Sept. 19th increased to 3,000 on Sept. 27th with at least 500 present at the end of the month and into October. Lea Valley Res., 1,000 on Sept. 20th. A striking leucistic bird appeared at King George VI Res. on Aug. 31st, and it, or another nearly white individual appeared at Rainham on Sept. 26th. Most birds had departed by the middle of October, the last two being at Staines Res., on Oct. 25th.

Inner London: Regent's Park, small numbers were seen over the lake from Mar. 26th onwards, maximum count on last date of 53 on Oct. 1st.

314 Swallow

One at Cheshunt G.P., on Mar. 29th was the early bird of the year, but most areas had their first birds during the next two weeks, particularly in the period Apr. 9th to 15th. The largest flocks reported were 500 at Tadworth on May 6th, flying NW in a three hour period, and at the Lea Valley Res. on Apr. 26th. Otherwise spring passage numbers did not exceed 100.

Return passage commenced in late August and early September and included counts of 1,500 plus moving SW over Tadworth on Aug. 28th, and up to 250 at Hilfield Park Res., in late August. A steady passage at Regent's Park from Sept. 23rd, when 200 were present, until the end of the month, was echoed by reports from Havering, Rainham, Caterham and Rye Meads S.F., at the same time. Most had gone by the end of October, but four birds lingered into November, two at Childerditch on Nov. 1st, and the same number at Beddington S.F., on Nov. 22nd.

316 House Martin

First reported from Kempton Park Res. with two on Mar. 21st, followed by singles at Cheshunt G.P. and Waltham (possibly the same bird) on Mar. 29th. A steady passage followed, with the first peak in mid-April, when 250 were reported at Maple Cross S.F. on the 19th, and a second peak in May when counts of 750 at Tadworth on the 6th, 400 at Wraysbury G.P. on the 10th and 200 at Troy Mill G.P. echoed smaller movements elsewhere.

The commencement of autumn passage in early August was reflected by counts of 500 at Stanstead Abbots on Aug. 9th, similar numbers at Tadworth and Beddington S.F., later in the month, and 600 at Bromley Common on Aug. 30th. High numbers continued to be reported throughout September, 500 at King George V Res. on the 20th and at Walton Res. on the 17th being the main count. Large flocks continued to be a feature in early October with 750 at Rye Meads S.F. on the 10th, several hundred at Queen Mary G.P. the same day, 500 at Staines Res. on the 11th and 500+ at Barn Elms Res. on the 18th. A few birds lingered on until the end of the month, and there were several November records, the last being singles at Walton Res. on the 15th and Cheshunt G.P. on the 19th.

Inner London: Campbell Road E3, breeding was reported with 2 + pairs. Barons Court W14, colony in three streets occupied. Hyde Park, Albert Gate, Knightsbridge, at least 19 nests. Hyde Park Gardens W2, two or three nests in new colony. Lowndes Road, new colony established. St. Johns Wood NW6, two nests. Last seen in Inner London in Regent's Park, two on Oct. 22nd.

1980 Correction

Inner London: the breeding colony at Susan Street SE1 should read Swan Street SE1.

320 Tree Pipit

An exceptionally early individual arrived at Stocker's Lake on Mar. 15th. The next was on Apr. 4th at the same place, then a spate of records from most of the usual localities during the following week. The records received indicate 70 probable breeding pairs at 26 sites but full distribution coverage is lacking, particularly from Herts. The last was on Oct. 16th at Dagnam Park. Breeding season distribution and Inner London records are given.

- E Coopersale, five pairs; Dagnam, nine singing males; Epping Forest, ten pairs; Hainault, six pairs; Havering, two pairs; Hornchurch, one singing male; and three singing males at North Weald.
- H Bishops Wood, one singing male; Broxbourne Woods, at least four pairs.
- M Bushy Park, one singing in May, June and July. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, singles on May 7th and Aug. 26th. Regent's Park, one on Apr. 28th.
- B Black Park, two singing males; Oakend Wood, one singing male in May.
- K High Elms, two from early May to mid-July; Joyden's Wood, at least one pair bred; Shoreham, one singing at the end of May.
- S Ashted Common, two singing males; Banstead/Walton Heaths, nine singing males; Bookham Common, one singing male; Epsom Common, one singing male; Headley Heath, at least one pair bred; New Addington, one singing in late May; Selsdon Bird Sanctuary, one singing in early May; Wimbledon Common, at least five pairs bred.

322 Meadow Pipit

Reported in the breeding season from only 12 sites, the majority in Essex and Surrey, as in the case of Tree Pipit coverage is poor. Spring passage was noticeable during March, over 100 were seen at several places between 15th and 23rd, 200 reported at Cheshunt and Sewardstone. Autumn passage in late September and early October consisted of flocks of 100 to 200 or more at Beddington S.F., Epsom Downs, Orpington, Osterley Park and Rainham Marsh. Breeding season distribution, Inner London records and maximum winter flocks are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, six pairs bred; Grays, two pairs; Hornchurch, eight singing males; Rainham Marsh, up to 25 pairs probably bred; West Thurrock, four pairs probably bred. A winter flock at Rainham of 100 at the end of September, had increased to 180 by early October; 150 were seen in the hard weather movement of Dec. 26th.

- H Park Street, two males on territory at the end of May was the sole breeding record received. Maple Cross S.F., 240 on Dec. 12th. Potters Bar, the same individual trapped for the fourth successive winter.
- M Bushy Park; two singing males; Shepperton G.P., at least four territories held at the end of May. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, maxima on autumn passage of 18 on Sept. 23rd and 38 on Oct. 6th. Kensal Green cemetery, three on Feb. 3rd.
- B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, 30+ on Nov. 7th.
- K Erith Marsh, one pair bred. Orpington, 144 on Oct. 4th.
- S Ashted Common, one pair on territory; Beddington S.F., one pair summered; Richmond Park, at least one pair bred; Wimbledon Common, bred. Beddington S.F., 100 in December.

324a Rock Pipit

- E Girling Res., two on Nov. 15th (CF*n*). King George V Res., one on Jan. 3rd, maximum of four on Apr. 4th, one on Nov. 17th, Dec. 12th and 19th (JF). Rainham Marsh, four on Jan. 10th and 12 on Dec. 19th (MKD). Thurrock, three on Nov. 7th. Walthamstow Res., one from Oct. 8th to Nov. 3rd with five on Oct. 23rd (CA).
- H Hilfield Park Res., singles on Mar. 28th and Oct. 31st (CIB).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., two on Oct. 21st and one the next day (JAS). Queen Mary Res., one on Oct. 4th and 11th, six on the 18th and three on Dec. 13th (PC*t*,PN). Staines Res., two on Mar. 18th, a single bird in late October and four passed W on Nov. 1st (JAH). Wood Green Res., one on Oct. 18th (NB*n*). Wraysbury Res., one on Oct. 4th and two on Oct. 25th (EEG, PN).
- B Queen Mother Res., Datchet, two on Oct. 25th and Dec. 13th and a single on Nov. 7th (EEG,AVM). Wraysbury G.P., single birds on Apr. 8th, Oct. 4th and Nov. 1st (RRG,JAH).
- K Dartford Marsh, up to four in January and February, ten on Oct. 25th and two present in November and December (DRG). River Thames, Woolwich, one on Feb. 9th (PJS*n*).
- S Barn Elms Res., one present in January and Mar. 30th and 31st, eight on Oct. 15th increased to 13 on the 18th then dropped to four on the 31st and a single bird on two dates in November (RBH,PEB,PJS*n*).

324b Water Pipit

- E Berwick Ponds, singles on Jan. 24th, Dec. 12th and 13th (MKD). King George V Res., up to two from Apr. 4th to 6th (GJW *et al.*). Walthamstow Res., one on Dec. 23rd (PF).
- H Singles at Amwell G.P. on April 9th and Maple Cross S.F. on Jan. 24th (CIB).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Mar. 14th (PN). Springwell, single birds present during January and February (RRD *et al.*) and again in November and December (JE,IGJ *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., two on Dec. 27th (RRG).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., two on Mar. 15th (AHH).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 22nd (PEB *et al.*) and a maximum of four on Oct. 18th and singles on several dates until Nov. 9th. Beddington S.F. maximum of four on Jan. 24th, Feb. 1st and Nov. 15th, also singles on many dates in March and October, November and December (SJA,AV *et al.*). Hersham S.F., seven on Jan. 11th, four on Feb. 15th, five on the 22nd, then two in October and November (mo). Walton Res., one on Nov. 1st.

325 Yellow Wagtail

Records of breeding or of birds apparently resident in the breeding season together with ringing numbers, Inner London records and birds having the characters of the Blue-headed (*flava*) race are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, six pairs bred. Hornchurch, two pairs bred. Navestock, two pairs bred. Netherhall, five pairs bred. Rainham Marsh, 15 pairs bred and for the second year in succession a Blue-headed male paired with a normal female. West Thurrock, two pairs bred. A roost at Rainham contained 70 on July 26th but had decreased to 50 by Aug. 7th. Walthamstow Res., a Blue-headed male on Apr. 26th.
- H Maple Cross S.F., one pair probably bred. Park Street, one pair present in summer. Blue-headed birds were seen at Hilfield Park Res. from Apr. 26th to May 1st with three on Apr. 29th; Maple Cross S.F., one on May 23rd and 24th and another on June 14th; St. Albans G.P., a male on Aug. 23rd.
- M Bedfont G.P., seen regularly in June, up to three birds present. Kempton Park Res., 'a few pairs nested'. Shepperton G.P., at least one present at the usual breeding site. Bedfont G.P., a roost in August and September contained c. 50 on Aug. 27th, rising to 100 by the 31st, c. 50 on Sept. 2nd, 60 on the 8th, c. 100 on the 10th but only 40+ on the 12th. Between Aug. 6th and Sept. 12th 153 were caught and ringed, the low number of retraps suggests that the roost was transitional. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, singles on Apr. 28th, May 8th, 28th and Aug. 28th and six flew S on Aug. 17th. Regent's Park, singles from Apr. 23rd to May 8th, one on Sept. 11th and four on Sept. 17th. St. James's Park, a female on Apr. 25th.
- K Dartford Marsh, two pairs probably bred. Thamesmead, eight pairs of which two are known to have bred.
- S Barn Elms Res., a male holding territory in May. Beddington S.F., six pairs summered but young seen from only one pair. Blue-headed males were seen at Barn Elms Res. on Apr. 3rd to 5th and another on May 4th; Beddington S.F., one on July 22nd. Inner London: National Theatre, Waterloo, two flew W on Apr. 29th.

327 Grey Wagtail

Records of breeding or suspected breeding and high numbers outside the breeding season are given.

- E Pairs reared young at Fisher's Green G.P., Waltham Abbey, Walthamstow Res. and possibly Berwick Ponds.
- H Breeding proved at Croxley Hall G.P., Croxley Mill, Mill End and Troy Mill.
- M Bred successfully at Black Jacks Mill, Burnt Oak, Dollis Brook, Harefield (two pairs), Mutton Brook NW11 and Wood Green Res., also present during the breeding season at Neasden (two pairs), Uxbridge (two pairs), and Wealdstone Brook. Maximum winter count of six at Staines Res. on Nov. 8th. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, up to eight dates from Aug. 26th to Oct. 21st. Regent's Park, one pair bred nearby on the Grand Union Canal. Waterloo/Westminster area, apart from two on Sept. 23rd singles seen at both ends of the year from Jan. 9th to Feb. 11th and from Oct. 16th to Dec. 24th.
- K Probable breeding pairs at Blackheath, Catford, Chinbrook Meadows, Foots Cray Meadows, Littlebrook, Lullingstone, Petts

Wood (three pairs), River Ravensbourne, Lewisham (five pairs). Highest winter count was six at Sevenoaks G.P. on Nov. 22nd.

- S Successful breeding reported from Barn Elms Res., Claremont Lake, Esher, River Wandle (four sites) and Wimbledon Common. Five at Barn Elms Res. on Nov. 10th and Beddington S.F. on Dec. 6th were the highest winter counts.

1980 Correction

- S Line 1, after Beddington Park, insert 'to Watermeads on River Wandle'.

328a Pied Wagtail

Roosts or numbers in excess of 100 and Inner London records are given.

- E Pre-roost gatherings at Rainham of 100 or more from August to December.
H Rye Power Station, peak monthly counts of birds at roost.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1,062	984	1,048	872	611	294	116	195	618	868	901	609

Maple Cross S.F., 130 on Oct. 18th. Rye Meads S.F., 150 on Mar. 14th.

- M Edmonton S.F., 500 counted at roost in January and February and 720 in mid-March. Springwell reedbed, c. 950 at roost on Nov. 27th.
K Littlebrook G.P., 60 at roost on July 5th, 70 on July 31st, 150 on Aug. 13th had declined to 40 on Sept. 3rd. Orpington Civic Hall, c. 800 at roost on Feb. 14th.
S Hogsmill S.F., 150 at roost on Jan. 18th. Beddington S.F., 120+ on Oct. 10th.

328b White Wagtail

- E Girling Res., one on Apr. 5th (GBs). King George V Res., singles on Apr. 4th, 5th, 8th, 27th and 28th with two on the 26th (GJW,PJV). Rainham, an early bird on Mar. 14th, the next on Apr. 4th and 5th then 10th, two on the 12th and five on the 15th and one on the 26th (MKD,NJI). Walthamstow Res., one on Mar. 31st (LC).
H Broxbourne G.P., one on Mar. 22nd (GJW). Hilfield Park Res., one bird present from Apr. 7th to the 29th, two on the 28th and May 1st (CIB). Rye Meads S.F., singles on Mar. 22nd and 29th (RMRG). Stocker's Farm, one on Mar. 6th and another at Stocker's Lake on Apr. 20th (TRD).
M Singles at Harefield Moor G.P., King George VI Res., Queen Mary Res., Rammey Marsh and Staines Res. between Mar. 15th and May 4th (IGJ,PN,MJR). Wood Green Res., two on Apr. 20th and May 3rd (NBn). Inner London: Regent's Park, one on May 27th (TD).
B Old Slade N.R., two on Mar. 17th (BBC). Wraysbury G.P., one on Apr. 12th (JAH).
S Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 22nd (PEB). Oxted, one on Apr. 18th (JCW).

1978 Additional Record

- S Holmethorpe S.P., one on May 9th (PJH).

329 Waxwing

- E Harlow, one present from Dec. 16th to 22nd (WGL *et al.*). Gidea Park, one on Dec. 22nd had apparently been there three days (AJG).
 M Harefield, one on Dec. 23rd (BSS).
 S Goodmans Furze, Headley, two from Feb. 7th to 12th (MKF).

330 Dipper

- H River Lea, between Lemsford Springs and Stanborough, one from Jan. 25th to Mar. 28th (JE, AVM *et al.*). A second bird is known to have been present from Mar. 8th to 28th (HNHS), and crossed the recording boundary at least once although it spent most of the time outside it. Both birds were of the black-bellied race *C.c.cinclus*. (See photograph opposite).

1975 Additional Record

- H A bird present on Jan. 19th at the same locality listed above, is considered likely, in retrospect, to have crossed the recording boundary into the London Area.

These three records bring the total for the London Area to ten.

331 Wren

Generally under-reported, records received indicated average numbers present in the breeding season with an increase in Osterley Park and at Tadworth; a high count of 51 at Sevenoaks G.P. on May 1st. However, numbers at the end of the year were greatly depleted by the severe frost in mid-December, and some of the usual haunts were deserted from Dec. 8th to 23rd. In late December birds were seen frequenting the Thames foreshore in addition to a few other sheltered places.

Inner London: bred in St. James's Park, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens and possibly Belgrave Square and Holland Park.

333 Dunnock

No records were available from the Inner London Parks on breeding this year. At Bromley Common 36 were counted on Jan. 25th and 30 on Feb. 22nd. There was a 15% increase noted in the Tadworth area. Beddington S.F., one with a white head on Jan. 20th.

336 Robin

Apart from the Surrey records below, only four records received; one of which was a breeding record from Holland Park.

- S Bookham Common, number of territories over the last five years (GBn).

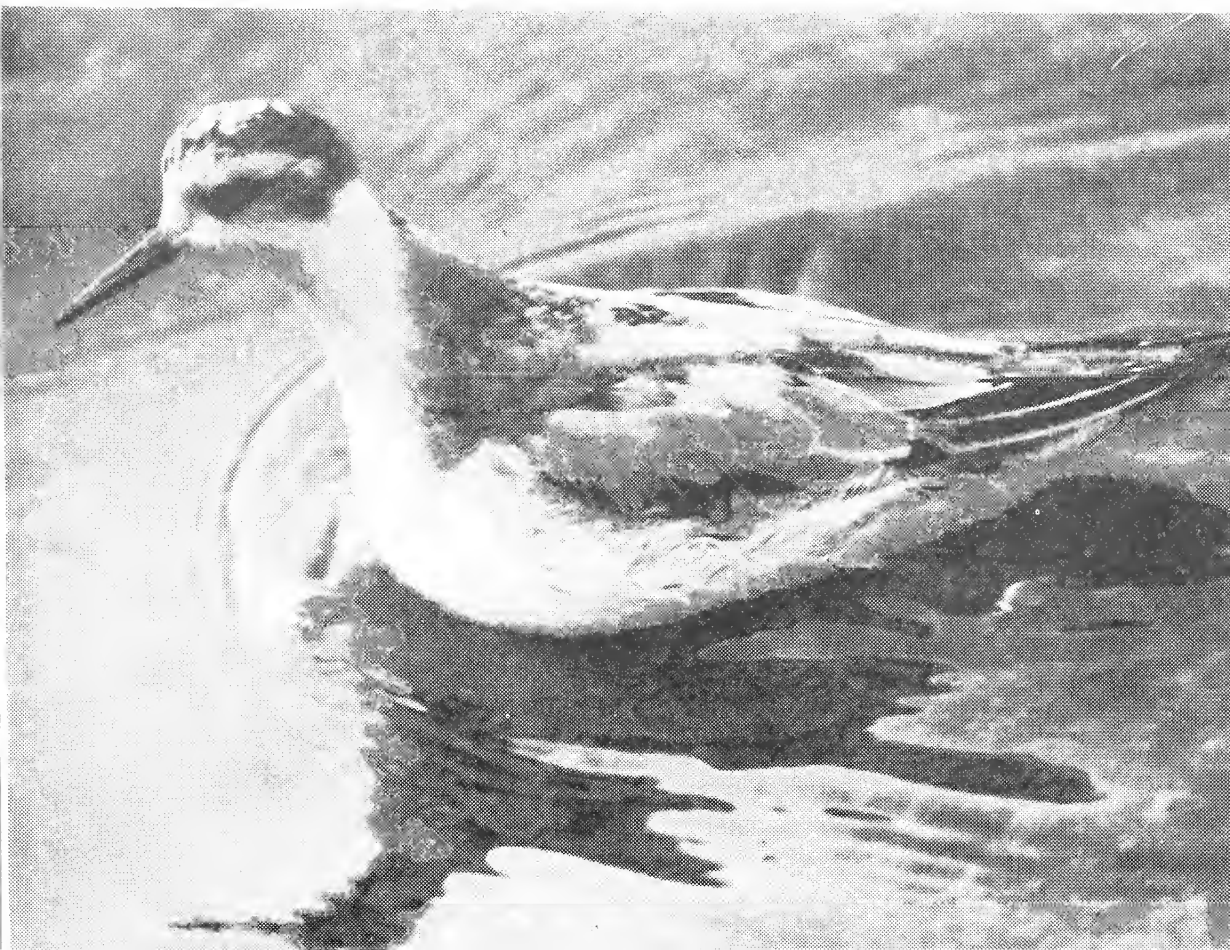
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
40 acres of Woodland	34	40	41	—	40
96 acres of Scrubland	34	30	40	33	20

338 Nightingale

- E Epping Forest, a singing male present from May 16th, and breeding suspected (PAB, JF *et al.*). Hainault Forest, two pairs bred and an additional singing male present (MKD). Fisher's Green, a singing male in the first two weeks of May (GJW).



ABOVE: Dipper of the continental Black-bellied race at Lemsford Springs, Herts., one of two present between January and March (Photo A. V. Moon). BELOW: Grey Phalarope, King George V Res., one of several blown into the London Area by the September gales (Photo D. M. Cottridge).



- H Broxbourne and Cowheath Woods, four singing males in May; Northaw Great Wood, one pair bred, also **four** singing males; Rye Meads S.F., one on June 28th (HNHS, TG).
- M Bedfont G.P., one trapped on June 25th, retrapped on 29th and Aug. 4th (RRG). Queen Mary G.P., a juvenile ringed on July 18th was retrapped on the 25th, and another trapped on Aug. 8th (HRG).
- K Joyden's Wood, one pair bred (DRG). Singing males at Cudham, Downe, and Lullingstone Park in May and June (GBC, WJW *et al.*).
- S Singing males at Bookham Common, Ditton Common, Esher Common, Great Earl's Wood, Hurst Green, Itchingwood Common, Richmond Park, and Weston Green, Esher (GBn, PEB, AMt, DM *et al.*).

342 Black Redstart

The distribution of pairs and singing males in the breeding season is given. Birds on spring passage were seen at 15 localities and at five in the autumn; during the winter birds were seen at nine localities, particularly Rainham Marsh, King George V Res., Drayton Park, Dartford Marsh and West Wickham. One bird, a female at Twickenham was seen from January to March in the observer's garden, another, also a female, visited gardens in late March at Woodlands Road, Sutton (MB, PCt).

	<i>Pairs Bred</i>	<i>Pairs Present</i>	<i>Singing Male(s)</i>	<i>Observer</i>
E Beckton Gas Works	5			AFW
London Dock E1			1	AFW
Stratford			2	DFH
Thurrock			1	CFn
Royal Victoria Dock	2	1		AFW
West India Dock	2			AFW
H Rye House Power Station	1			HNHS
Stanstead Abbots		1		JF
M Brimsdown		1	2	JF
Drayton Park			1	CA
Tottenham Gas Works			1	JF
Inner London:				
Chelsea Creek	1			TAHS
Tower Bridge		1		TG
K East Greenwich Gas Works			2	PJSn
Littlebrook	1			DRG
S Haydons Road, Wimbledon	1			DAC
Inner London:				
Bankside Power Station	1			RSh
	—	—	—	<i>Totals</i>
	14	4	10	28
1980	8	12	8	28
1979	5	5	14	24
1978	15	8	23	46
1977	17	5	4	26

Breeding records were received from fewer sites than in any of the last four years; this is a trend that has developed since 1978 when records were sent in from 38 sites. However, the overall numbers of

breeding or suspected breeding pairs have changed very little; numbers given below the 1981 distribution show the previous four years' totals.

343 Redstart

No breeding records, but there were singing males at a usual breeding site in June and at least three others at another site.

- E Epping Forest, at least four singing males in the breeding season, though there was no proof of breeding (JF *et al.*). Single birds on Apr. 12th at Rainham and Thorndon Park (PLn,DSB). Autumn passage from Sept. 4th to the 27th at six localities; one very late bird at Rainham on Nov. 22nd.
- H Northaw Great Wood, three singing males in June, also one pair which may have bred (RB,HNHS). Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 25th (RMRG). Autumn passage from July 19th to Sept. 22nd, single birds at four localities (JD,JPW *et al.*).
- M Singles from Apr. 8th at Alexandra Park until May 10th at Queen Mary G.P. Two on May 2nd at Kempton Park (TG,HRG *et al.*). Single birds in June at Mill Hill and Queen Mary G.P. (HRG,EHW). In autumn singles from Aug. 31st to Sept. 7th at four localities (MJR *et al.*). Inner London: Hyde Park, one on May 2nd (TAHS). Regent's Park, at least one bird between Sept. 2nd and 28th and two together on the 21st (TD,SB,JPW).
- B Wraybury G.P., a juvenile trapped on Aug. 10th (RRG).
- K Single birds at four localities from Apr. 24th to May 15th (GD *et al.*). One in autumn at West Wickham on Sept. 28th (BB).
- S Barnes, one on Apr. 5th, Bookham Common, one on Apr. 7th and one at Beddington S.F. on May 2nd (DM,GDM). Three from Sept. 3rd to the 15th at four localities.

1980 Additional Record

- S Whitehill, Caterham, a male on Apr. 22nd (PJH).

The late bird in Essex in November is the third record for that month, the other two are on Nov. 1st in 1938 and 1966. The latest ever is one on Dec. 19th 1970.

344 Whinchat

No proof of breeding but birds were seen until late May at Epsom Common and Rainham Marsh (PEB,MKD). The spring movement began on Apr. 13th at Epsom, then there were only a few until a peak of eight on May 10th at six localities (MKD,JF *et al.*). Only four others, all singles, seen during the rest of May. Autumn passage had a late start, from Aug. 21st, but peak figures were high with from ten to 15 at Beddington S.F., Broxbourne G.P., Havering and Rainham Marsh all in the first week of September. The maximum was 26 at Rammey Marsh, Enfield, on Sept. 4th (GJW). Single October records came from Beddington S.F., 18th; Headley Heath, 16th; Rainham, 3rd; and Rye Meads S.F., 2nd. The last was at Headley Heath on the 22nd (CKD,POD).

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, one on May 21st (TD).

345 Stonechat

At least 24 pairs bred successfully from a total of 28 possible breeding pairs. A very good year, exceeding 1978 when up to 25 pairs

bred. More wintering birds were also reported, maximum of ten at Rainham on Oct. 18th. Breeding or possible breeding records and Inner London records are given.

- E Rainham, six pairs bred. Hornchurch, four pairs bred. Single pairs bred at Barking, Beckton and West Thurrock. A pair at Walthamstow Res., may have nested (MKD,CWP *et al.*).
- M Bedfont G.P. and Osterley Park, one pair bred at each. Inner London: singles at Old Oak Common in February and Regent's Park in mid-October (PEB,JPW).
- K Bred successfully at Bexley, Crayfordness, possibly two pairs, Littlebrook G.P., Thamesmead and possibly Dartford Marsh (DRG,SJG *et al.*).
- S Richmond Park, two pairs bred; single pairs bred at Epsom Common, Ham Fields and Mitcham Common, and possibly at Beddington S.F. (BAM,WRI *et al.*).

346 Wheatear

The first spring sighting was on Mar. 14th at Kempton Park (HRG), followed by a sizeable influx in the next two days at seven localities, maximum of six at Beddington S.F. on the 15th. The peak period was from late April to mid-May, maxima were, 20 at Rainham on May 2nd, 17 at London Airport on Apr. 28th and 14 there on May 12th (MKD,JAS). Two pairs were present at possible breeding sites during the summer months but there was no actual proof that they bred. However, two juveniles at Perry Oaks S.F. in early July may possibly have been of local origin. The excellent coverage and good numbers of records continued in the autumn from Aug. 8th at King George V Res. until Oct. 31st, maximum figures were 13 at Rainham on Aug. 30th and nine at Thurrock on Sept. 5th (MKD). There were three November records, Beddington S.F. on the 2nd, Epsom Downs on the 5th and London Airport on the 13th (CKD,POD,JAS).

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, singles on three dates in April from the 13th and one on Aug. 28th; Hyde Park, one on Aug. 21st; Malet St. WC1 on Apr. 29th.
- S Inner London: New Cross on Mar. 22nd.

359 Ring Ouzel

- E Dagnam Park, one on Sept. 12th (DS).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one on Oct. 17th (RLn). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Sept. 12th and 13th (GJW *et al.*).
- M Parliament Hill Fields, Hampstead, a male on Apr. 9th (HHOR).
- K Bromley Common, one on Apr. 19th (GD). Fooks Cray Meadows, one on May 9th (BB). Grove Park, one on Apr. 12th (WJW).
- S Ashted Common, one on Apr. 18th (PEB). Barn Elms Res., one on May 2nd (RBH). Beddington S.F., singles on Mar. 27th and Oct. 3rd and two on Oct. 26th (SJA,DAC,GDM,DH). Holmethorpe S.P., one on Apr. 5th (DPC,RWHS). Inner London: New Cross, one on Mar. 22nd (LSF).

A good year, the best since 1977, all on typical dates; much more frequent in the spring than in autumn.

360 Blackbird

Poorly reported, only 20 records received. Some large winter flock numbers and Inner London breeding records are given.

- H Maple Cross S.F., 80 on Oct. 26th.
 M Inner London: Bread St. EC4, one pair bred. Islington, two pairs bred in the grounds of Islington Green School. New River Walk, N1, six pairs held territory during the breeding season.
 K Bromley Common and Darenth, maximum wintering flocks reached 80 in the period January to March. Littlebrook and Wilmington, up to 200 in both areas during November and December.
 S Beddington S.F., 70 on Oct. 10th. Inner London: County Hall, Westminster, at least two pairs bred.

364 Fieldfare

The first few months of the year were not marked by any dramatic increase in wintering flocks or hard weather movements. The highest figures reported were at Bromley Common, 450 in January, 400 in February but only 280 in early March (GD), and a roost of 500 at Cheshunt in April. Only four flocks of over 200 were reported. There were three May records, five at Bromley Common on the 3rd, six at Holmethorpe S.P. on the 2nd and four in Osterley Park on the 4th (DPC, GD, DGH).

Apart from one at Alexandra Park on Aug. 31st the first autumn arrivals were at Dagnam Park on Sept. 6th and 12th, 12 in Regent's Park on the 15th and one at Northfleet on Sept. 27th (AJG, TD *et al.*). On Oct. 24th a huge influx was well documented with numbers of birds passing W noted at nine different localities, 700 in 1½ hours at Northfleet, 520 at Romford, 474 at Orpington; of 600 seen at Beddington S.F. 400 passed W. Five other flocks varied in size between 150 and 300+ (mo). In mid-November there were 400+ at Wraysbury G.P.; up to 500 at Thamesmead and 450 on the 29th at Fisher's Green and 320 at Dysham Park. The Cheshunt G.P. roost held 620 on Nov. 14th but had decreased to 450 by the end of the month. The cold spell in December resulted in departures from many areas but 300 remained at Bromley Common on the 6th and 500 flew W at Darenth on the 13th; at the end of the month there were 500 in gardens at Northfleet and 450 still at Beddington S.F. on the 31st. Inner London: Holborn, WC1, c. 100 flew NW on Jan. 13th (DAB). Belgrave Square, 19 flew SW on Dec. 8th as did 25 at Holland Park and 120 over Regent's Park on the same day, the next day another 120 flew SW at the latter site (PCt, TD, SB, JPPW). Also at Regent's Park, 30 on Oct. 16th (TD). Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, 25 flew NW on Oct. 24th, 47 W on Nov. 3rd, c. 50 NE on Nov. 12th and 35 flew W on Nov. 16th (DAB). Surrey Docks, 20 on Dec. 31st (LSF).

365 Song Thrush

Evidence of influxes with other thrushes in October was suggested by some observers. Present in some numbers at a few localities, Littlebrook, 100+ in December were reported as being Continental birds, also reported from Beddington S.F., Bromley Common, Joyden's Wood and Walthamstow in smaller numbers. The only Inner London breeding record received was from Holland Park.

366 Redwing

Similar numbers to Fieldfare were present at the beginning of the year. Cudham, 230 on Jan. 4th had increased to 300 by Mar. 1st.

Bromley Common, 500 on Feb. 22nd had decreased to 300 by Mar. 1st. Dagnam Park, 200 on Jan. 4th. Harefield, 400 in January, 300 in February was down to 200 in March. Apart from 310 at Park Langley on the 4th numbers were generally smaller in March. There were eight April records the last of which was on the 22nd with 18 at Walton-on-the-Hill.

Reported in September from Regent's Park with three on the 15th (TD) the only record for that month. Singles on two dates in early October but with the onset of cold weather from the 22nd onwards birds were seen on the move in large numbers beginning with 200 over Wandsworth on that date. On the 24th—the same date that Fieldfares were on the move—a noticeably heavy movement occurred with a maximum of 1,000+ flying W over Queen Mary G.P. and 500 at Beddington S.F. and Orpington. From Nov. 1st to mid-December flocks in excess of 500 were seen at five localities, maximum of *c.* 1,000 in fields at West Wickham on Dec. 6th. The roost at Headley Heath held *c.* 500 on Nov. 2nd. Affected by a second cold spell in late December with several flocks numbering from 100 to 300, in company with Fieldfares stripping berries and visting gardens with the largest number present at the end of the year being 400 at Beddington S.F. Other Inner London records: Holland Park, four on Dec. 8th and 15 on the 9th, then singles on four dates to the 24th; Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, 15 on Oct. 16th, three on Nov. 3rd and nine on Dec. 9th (DAB). Regent's Park, two on Oct. 13th, at least 100+ on Oct. 24th, Dec. 9th and 10th; Sussex Square, two on Dec. 24th (PEB,DAB,SB,TD,JPPW).

367 Mistle Thrush

An influx in September noted in Richmond Park, Bayfordbury, Holland Park and Osterley Park. Other gatherings in June, July and August indicated a good breeding year, largest post-breeding season flocks were, 34 at Barn Elms Res. on July 17th and 52 in one flock at Stonehill Farm (K) on Sept. 6th. A pure albino was at Hunton Bridge (H) on Mar. 12th.

369 Cetti's Warbler

- E At one locality up to three singing in May and June (MJA). In the Lea Valley one singing near the Herts. border in June (CF*n*).
- H In the Lea Valley bred successfully at two localities and up to three singing males at a third in June (HNHS *et al.*). In the Colne Valley one pair bred successfully (RAP).
- M Shepperton G.P., one singing on May 23rd and July 12th (HWE).
- K Ruxley G.P., one singing from Nov. 3rd to 10th (JBF,RT*k*).

Not recorded in the London Area at all before 1975, these three breeding records—the total is now four—show the pace of the colonization. The Essex and Herts. localities are the stronghold from which the spread may continue; the effects of the cold spells in the subsequent winter remain to be seen.

373 Grasshopper Warbler

- E Epping, one singing on May 9th. Fisher's Green, one pair. Harlow, two singing and one pair bred. Walthamstow Marsh, one singing on May 9th.

- H Abbots Langley, two on May 16th. Broxbourne Woods, one on Apr. 12th and three singing in June. Cheshunt G.P., one on Apr. 25th, three on May 1st and a pair in June. Rye House Marsh, one on Apr. 16th. Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 11th and a pair in June. Stanstead Abbots G.P., a pair in June. Stocker's Lake, one singing on July 19th. Symondshyde, one in May.
- M Brent Res., one singing on May 2nd.
- B Oakend Wood, a pair displaying on May 2nd. Wraysbury G.P., one singing on Apr. 29th; present until June 12th but no evidence of breeding.
- K Leaves Green, one on Apr. 18th and three territories at the end of April.
- S Ashted Common, five pairs or singing males located; a pair feeding fledged young on June 1st and a nest with six young found on June 29th. Epsom Common, two pairs located; one pair feeding fledged young on June 7th. Holmethorpe S.P., one on May 4th.

375 Savi's Warbler

- H Cheshunt G.P., a male singing on May 20th and 21st (DNC,JF,MJO).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the second record for the London Area this century, the first as recent as 1979.

377 Aquatic Warbler

- E Rainham Marsh, one on Aug. 12th (NJI).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is only the second in the last 15 years and the 12th record for the London Area this century. The last was in September 1977, all have occurred in the period July 29th to Sept. 24th.

378 Sedge Warbler

Inner London records, reports of 10 or more territories in the breeding season and some comments on local populations are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, 12 pairs; Hornchurch, 14 singing males; Rainham, 15 pairs; Walthamstow Marsh and Res., 26 singing males on May 4th.
- H Maple Cross S.F., 20 on Apr. 17th; bred but numbers down. Rye Meads S.F., 30 on Apr. 11th. Stocker's Lake, 13 pairs bred.
- M Alexandra Park, five to seven territories; four pairs bred successfully, the best year yet at this locality. Queen Mary G.P., a very poor year, none bred and very scarce until late August. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, singles on May 1st and 15th. Regent's Park, singles on Apr. 25th, May 1st and May 6th to 8th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 25 singing males in May and June.
- K Littlebrook G.P., ten on May 25th, 20 on July 31st and 30 on Aug. 13th.
- S Beddington S.F., at least 12 singing males in summer.

382 Reed Warbler

Breeding season distribution giving number of singing males and Inner London records are given.

- E Berwick Ponds (25), Hainault (1), Hornchurch (18), Navestock (3), Rainham Marsh (35) and West Thurrock (8).
- H Batchworth Lake (2), Hilfield Park Res. (3), Maple Cross S.F. (3), Stocker's Lake (12). Rye Meads S.F., one ringed in August 1977 was found dying at Souk el Arba du Rharb, Morocco in May 1981 (RMRG).
- M Bedfont (27), Harefield Moor G.P. (6), Highgate Ponds (1), Kempton (6), Queen Mary G.P. (12), Shepperton G.P. (2), Staines Moor (2). Inner London: Hyde Park, one on Aug. 22nd. Regent's Park, one singing male from June 12th to 22nd.
- B Old Slade N.R. (3), Wraysbury G.P. (25).
- K Littlebrook G.P. (up to 30), Thamesmead (10).
- S Barn Elms Res. (1), Beddington S.F. (2), Hershams G.P. (4), Richmond Park (1), Wimbledon Common (1).

388 Melodious Warbler

- E West Thurrock, one trapped and ringed on May 26th (RT).

The fourth record for the London Area this century and the first in spring, the last record was in September 1973.

397 Lesser Whitethroat

Another increase evident in the breeding population compared with recent years. Reported from 26 localities in Essex (the largest number ever), at least three in Herts., 12 in Middx., six in Kent and 26 in Surrey; a total of 71 localities compared with only 45 in 1978. At Queen Mary G.P. the number of birds trapped during the year was 106 compared to only 27 in 1978.

- M Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, singles on May 2nd and 7th. Regent's Park, singles on six dates from May 1st to June 1st; singles on six dates from Aug. 24th to Sept. 10th.

398 Whitethroat

Comments on status and Inner London records are given.

A slight increase overall is apparent from the number of breeding records. There were local fluctuations in the numbers compared with the 1980 totals but the general situation is continually improving since the dramatic population crash of 1969. Reported in the breeding season from 45 localities in Essex, three in Herts. (17 in 1980), nine in Middx., only one in Bucks., 23 in Kent and 59 in Surrey. The maximum was 18 pairs at Hornchurch.

- M Inner London: Holland Park, a male on May 11th. Kensington Gardens, one on Aug. 12th. Regent's Park, singles on Apr. 24th and May 23rd, Aug. 26th, Sept. 2nd, 25th and 28th.

399 Garden Warbler

Comparison with 1980 records showed various local fluctuations but overall the breeding status appeared to be little changed. Some comments on numbers, Inner London records and a ringing recovery are given.

The maximum number was at Hainault with seven pairs, an increase of one pair since 1979. At Banstead Downs, the concentrations

remained at the same level of nine singing males, whilst territories at Bookham Common declined from seven in 1980 to six this year.

- M Bedfont G.P., one ringed on Aug. 4th 1981, was recovered alive on Oct. 4th 1981, at Brazatortas, Ciudad Real, Spain (RRG). Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, singles on five dates from May 1st to 14th and five dates in the autumn from July 27th to Aug. 15th. Regent's Park, singles on May 4th and 11th and almost daily from Aug. 12th to 30th and two on Sept. 10th.

400 Blackcap

A summary of the winter records, Inner London records and a ringing recovery are given.

	<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>Total</i>
January and February: individuals	6	3	2	3	3	17
localities	3	3	2	2	3	13
November and December: individuals	—	3	7	8	8	26
localities	—	3	6	6	7	22

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, at least two pairs bred; one nestling ringed on June 18th was controlled near Cheshunt on Sept. 5th. Holland Park, one singing on Apr. 9th, one to three singing males from May 8th to 15th, females on May 12th, 14th and 29th, two singing males on May 31st and June 15th and one on July 8th. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, four to five territories. Kensal Green cemetery, singing males on May 6th and 26th.

408 Wood Warbler

- E Epping Forest, singing males at Warren Wood in May (CFn) and at Monk Wood on May 31st (JF). Hainault Forest, one on Apr. 15th and two singing males on May 7th (MKD). Harlow Woods, a pair in July, probably bred (AJL). Thorndon Park, two singing males on May 25th (MKD).
- H Bricket Wood, a male in May and June (HNHS). Chorleywood, one on May 3rd (CIB) and one on May 8th (TRD). Northaw Great Wood, four singing males on May 17th and 30th and a nest with eggs found on June 6th (RBd, HNHS).
- M Alexandra Park, two on Aug. 6th (NBn). Mad Bess Wood, one singing on June 10th but not heard subsequently (JE). Inner London: Regent's Park, two on May 6th, singles on May 12, 14th and 26th; three on Aug. 25th, singles on Aug. 30th and Sept. 2nd (SB,TD,JPW).
- K Bromley Common, one singing on May 9th (BB). Lullingstone Park, one singing in late May (WJW). Petts Wood, two singing on May 10th, one singing on May 30th (GBC,KHP).
- S Barn Elms Res., one singing on May 2nd (PEB,RBH). Bookham Common, two singing on May 2nd (JJB). Reigate Heath, two singing on June 7th (JCW). Tilburstowhill Common, one singing on May 25th, 29th and June 7th (DAC,RDH). Wimbledon Common, one singing on May 7th; one singing about a mile away from June 5th to 13th (EDM).

409 Chiffchaff

A summary of the winter records and Inner London records are given.

	<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>Total</i>
January and February: individuals	2	1	5	3	1	4	16
localities	2	1	3	2	1	3	12
November and December: individuals	1	1	3	2	2	5	14
localities	1	1	2	1	2	2	9

M Inner London: Regent's Park, one pair raised two broods, six in each; the only previous breeding in Regent's Park was in 1972; only the third case of breeding in Inner London this century. Holland Park, one singing on many dates from Apr. 3rd until July 13th; two on July 8th. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, up to six from Aug. 13th to Oct. 6th. Ladbroke Square, one singing on Apr. 23rd.

1980 Additional Record

S Harestone Hill, Caterham, five on Feb. 24th (PJH) this record affects the winter summary given and should now read '16 birds from nine localities in February'.

410 Willow Warbler

Inner London records are given.

M Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, up to four in spring, and up to 13 from July 27th to Aug. 28th. Regent's Park, one on Mar. 26th; autumn passage from July 20th to Oct. 14th during which period 32 were ringed. St. James's Park, one singing on Apr. 24th.

411 Goldcrest

Inner London records are given.

M Holland Park, one singing on May 12th; one or two from Oct. 21st to Nov. 12th and two on Dec. 22nd. Kensal Green cemetery, one on Feb. 14th. Kensington Gardens, one singing on June 27th and July 18th suggests male holding territory; eight present on Oct. 16th.

412 Firecrest

E Grays Thurrock, one on Mar. 27th (CFn). Hainault Forest, one singing from May 7th until the end of the month (MKD). Harlow, one singing on June 6th (TW). Havering, one singing on June 6th (MKD). Mores Wood, two on Apr. 30th (EBWPS). West Thurrock, one on Apr. 12th (RT).

M Alexandra Park, one on May 9th (AHG). Darlands, Totteridge, one on Apr. 4th (HNHS). Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Apr. 16th (TD).

K Lullingstone Park, one on Mar. 28th (WJW).

S Caterham area, two on Apr. 26th (SH). Kew Gardens, one from Jan. 22nd to Feb. 3rd had been present on Dec. 22nd 1980 (RBH).

413 Spotted Flycatcher

The first reported was at Kew Gardens on Apr. 30th; the last at Osterley Park and Havering on Sept. 27th. Estimates of breeding populations for a few localities and Inner London records are given.

E Epping Forest, ten pairs; Hainault Forest, ten pairs; Havering, five pairs; Romford, two pairs; Thorndon Park, two pairs; Wanstead, four pairs.

H Maple Cross S.F., four pairs.

M Alexandra Park, at least six territories. Hampstead Heath, three pairs bred. Osterley Park, four nests found and another pair present. Inner London: Holland Park, probably one or two pairs. Hyde Park, at least three pairs bred, up to seven recorded on passage during August. St. George's Gardens, WC1, a pair feeding three young on July 8th. St. James's Park, recently fledged young being fed by adults in first half of August. Regent's Park, first and last dates, May 8th and Sept. 21st. Kensal Green cemetery, two on May 26th.

416 Pied Flycatcher

E Claybury, two on Sept. 4th (PE). Dagnam Park, singles on Sept. 2nd, 6th and 7th (AJG). Harlow, one on Sept. 1st (TW). Havering, four on Sept. 5th, three on Sept. 7th (MKD). Nazeing, one on Apr. 24th (MCE). Sewardstone, one on Sept. 4th and 5th (LG). Thorndon Park, one on May 4th (RL*n*). Wanstead, one on Sept. 20th and 27th (CWP).

H Potters Bar, one on Sept. 12th (JPW). Stocker's Lake, a male on Sept. 19th (HNHS).

M Alexandra Park, one on Aug. 13th (NB*n*). Hampstead Heath, one on Sept. 12th and 13th (MN,KES). Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on Aug. 15th (DAB). Regent's Park, singles on Apr. 16th, Aug. 11th and 12th, Sept. 1st, 3rd and 10th (SB,TD).

K Orpington, one on Aug. 23rd (BB). Petts Wood, a male on May 9th (TJT).

S New Malden, a male on Apr. 15th (JET).

417 Bearded Tit

E Berwick Ponds, five on Jan. 10th, two or three on Jan. 31st; five on Dec. 12th (DSB,MKD). Rainham Marsh, three on Dec. 23rd (MKD). West Thurrock Marsh, four pairs in June (CF*n*).

H Cheshunt G.P., two on Jan. 3rd (HNHS). Maple Cross S.F., five on Nov. 7th (MCRG). Rye Meads, two on Jan. 31st, Feb. 1st, Oct. 31st, six on Dec. 6th (HNHS).

M Brent Res., a male and a female on several dates from Jan. 10th to Mar. 2nd and on Nov. 15th, Dec. 24th and 27th; a female on Nov. 1st and Dec. 30th (LAB,PEB,RAP). Springwell Reed Bed, a male and female on Jan. 30th; a male on Oct. 23rd (HB).

B Old Slade N.R., 24 from Feb. 16th to 22nd, 20 of which were trapped and ringed (NS).

For the first time birds have summered in the London Area and may possibly have bred. Records have increased dramatically over the last six years and the tendency to linger in spring has been noted in the last two years.

418 Long-tailed Tit

The largest numbers reported were 50 in a mixed party at Walton Heath on Feb. 22nd and 40 at Amwell G.P. on Sept. 2nd. Elsewhere numbers did not exceed 30. Inner London records, including two cases of breeding, are given.

M Inner London: Holland Park, present from February onwards; one pair bred successfully; the largest numbers reported were seven on

May 20th and Dec. 22nd. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, two pairs bred; a flock of 14 on Sept. 28th. Regent's Park, one pair bred, the first proven breeding in the park since 1974, although breeding almost certainly took place in 1975; the largest number seen was 18 in late June. Brompton cemetery, seen during the year.

- S Inner London: Battersea Park, two parties of 11 and six on Jan. 6th, 10 on Jan. 18th.

419 Marsh Tit

The breeding season distribution as reported is given. There were no Inner London records.

- E Curtismill, one pair; Dagnam Park, one pair; Hainault, 12 pairs; Havering, three pairs; Navestock, one pair; Passingford, one pair (MKD).
 H Cassiobury Park, present in the breeding season (CIB). Panshanger, eight in July (FCB).
 K Bromley Common, two adults feeding young on July 26th (GD).
 S Arbrook Common, three pairs; a nest with eggs on May 8th (WRI). Ashtead Common, a pair; courtship feeding on Apr. 19th (AMt). Ashtead Forest, a pair on May 1st (WRI). Banstead and Perrotts Wood, three singing on Apr. 21st (RHBF) and two pairs on Apr. 22nd (WRI). Bookham Common, one territory (GBn). Caterham area, present all year, young observed from late July (SH). Epsom Common, present in May and June (PEB). Norbury Park, three pairs on May 6th (WRI). Walton Heath, three pairs on Apr. 19th (WRI).

420 Willow Tit

Breeding season distribution is given. There were no Inner London records.

- E Dagnam Park, two pairs; Hainault, three pairs; Havering, two pairs; Navestock, one pair; Passingford, one pair (MKD); Waltham Abbey, two pairs (JF).
 H Near Bayford, a pair in April (BW). Cassiobury Park, present in the breeding season (CIB, JDMe). Hilfield Park Res., present in the breeding season (CIB). Maple Cross S.F., bred (MCRG). Moor Lane, one in May, four in July (JH, TRD). Stocker's Lake, two pairs bred (TRD).
 M Harefield Moor G.P., present in the breeding season (CIB). Springwell Lake, one pair bred (JDn, TRD). Uxbridge, a family party on June 20th (PN).
 K Foots Cray Meadows, bred (SJG). Joyden's Wood, at least two pairs bred (DRG).
 S Ashtead Common, a nest with young on May 1st at Newton Wood (WRI). Bookham Common, two territories (GBn). Littleworth Common, a nest with ten eggs on Apr. 24th (WRI). Oxshott, pairs at Littleheath and Sixty-acre Wood on Mar. 15th and at Stoke Wood on Apr. 20th (WRI). Pilgrim Fort Field Study Centre, present all year, young ringed from July onwards (SH).

422 Coal Tit

Inner London records only are given.

M Inner London: Buckingham Palace Gardens, SW1, a pair feeding young in nest on May 19th. Holland Park, occasionally seen or heard throughout the year; two singing on Mar. 3rd and an adult and a juvenile seen on July 6th. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred.

423 Blue Tit

Inner London records only are given.

M Holland Park, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, St. James's Park, at least one pair bred successfully at each locality. Islington, two pairs bred at Islington Green School, others were present in the breeding season at Arlington Square and New River Walk. Kensington, an adult visited a nest site in a tree in May.

S St. Thomas's Hospital, one singing on Apr. 14th and 16th.

424 Great Tit

Melanistic birds with completely black heads were seen at Chertsey in late December and a pair showing identical plumage characters of dull grey green above and dirty buff below were seen in a garden at Stoneleigh in mid-April chasing off a normal plumage Great Tit. This last locality is not far from the Epsom locality where similar melanistic birds were seen in 1977 and 1978. Inner London records and a ringing recovery are given.

M Kempton Park, an adult male ringed on Sept. 11th 1971, was controlled (re-trapped and released) on Aug. 25th 1981 having survived over ten years. Inner London: bred in Holland Park, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens and St. James's Park. Islington, present during the breeding season at New River Walk.

425 Nuthatch

Even less information received than for 1980. Status unchanged in Epping Forest, 150 to 200 pairs present, it remains the species stronghold in the London Area. Seven pairs nested in next boxes in Theobalds Park. Inner London records are given.

M Regent's Park, one pair bred, four on Aug. 14th and six on Sept. 20th. Hyde Park, one on Aug. 15th. Holland Park, two on Sept. 6th, 9th and Dec. 24th and one on several dates between Oct. 11th and Dec. 22nd.

427 Treecreeper

Little information received is the now familiar comment. Inner London only two records received.

M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, recorded from April to August, one pair probably bred. Regent's Park, bred.

430 Golden Oriole

H Northaw Great Wood, a male from Apr. 17th to 20th (CD *per* PJG). Cheshunt G.P., one on May 30th and 31st (MJF,GJW).

432 Red-backed Shrike

H Stanstead Abbots, a female on May 9th (RLn).

K Sevenoaks G.P., one on July 16th (AHH).

All hope is now lost for breeding birds in the London Area, but odd birds still appear. The July record is especially outstanding, not since the last pair bred in 1975 has there been a record at this time of the year, presumably a non-breeding wanderer.

434 Great Grey Shrike

- E Romford, one on Oct. 23rd (KBt). Walthamstow Res., one from the beginning of the year until Mar. 2nd had been there since Dec. 23rd 1980 (AJGy,PRr *et al.*).
- H Amwell G.P., one from Nov. 22nd to Dec. 31st was heard singing on Dec. 12th (WGL,BR,FCB *et al.*). Cheshunt G.P., one from Jan. 1st to Feb. 2nd had been there since Dec. 21st 1980 (DNC,MJO,GJW).
- S Banstead Downs, one on Jan. 26th (NM). Beddington S.F., one from the beginning of the year until Mar. 31st had been present since Dec. 7th 1980 (SJA,DH,GDM,AW).

436 Jay

Inner London records only are given.

- M Inner London: Holland Park, one or two February to May and September to December; three on Feb. 16th and May 29th and 12 on Mar. 18th. Greencroft Gardens, NW6, present in area all year, maximum seven on Apr. 12th, but breeding not proved.

437 Magpie

Continues to increase. Parties of 30 or more seen in at least seven localities, all in the months of January, February and December and are usually roosting movements. Maxima of 50 at Ruislip N.R. on Jan. 31st and Hilfield Park Res. on Dec. 21st. Inner London records are given.

- M Brompton cemetery, two resident at the end of the year. Holland Park, one or two occasionally throughout the year; four on June 24th and three on July 8th. St. James's Park, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, at least one pair bred in each.
- S Surrey Docks, one on Dec. 31st.

440 Jackdaw

Roosting flocks of 200 or more were seen at nine localities throughout the year, principally in January, February and December, though there was some evidence that these roosts were in use from late summer onwards. Maximum of 500+ at Headley Court on Jan. 19th. The only sizeable (non-roosting) flock was 200 at a rubbish tip at Holmethorpe S.P. in December. Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, singles on Mar. 9th, 31st and two on the 30th, and another on Apr. 2nd; two on Oct. 22nd and 30th and ten on the 26th.

441 Rook

Rookeries and Inner London records are given.

- E Claytye Wood, Ockendon, six pairs. Epping, four pairs. Mill Hall, 60 pairs. Passingford, two pairs. Roding Valley, 140 pairs in nine rookeries. Theydon Bois, 17 pairs. Walthamstow Res., a nest on the heronry island was deserted in April.

- H Chorleywood, 113 nests in one rookery near Chandler's Cross. Garrett Wood, 12 nests.
- M Inner London: Regent's Park, two flew over on Nov. 6th.
- B Denham, 50 nests. Wraysbury G.P., 54 nests.
- S Walton Downs, 41 nests.

442a Carrion Crow

At least 16 flocks of over 200 were seen, usually these were pre-roost gatherings and mostly in the winter months. A roost at Bromley Common was in regular use throughout the year and held its largest number of 350 in November. Other maxima were 1,000 at a rubbish tip at Holmethorpe S.P. in December and at least as many on Wimbledon Common on Jan. 4th. Inner London records are given.

- M Islington, one pair present in the breeding season at Islington Green School. Kensington Gardens, 100 at roost on Feb. 10th. St. James's Park, at least one pair bred.

442b Hooded Crow

- K Northfleet, one on Nov. 27th (LFW). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Nov. 26th (AHH).

444 Starling

A westerly movement from the middle of October to Nov. 3rd reached a peak on Oct. 24th when a total of 4,382 birds were noted at five localities. Large roosts away from Inner London are given.

- H Watford, 15,000 at roost in December. Whippendell, 10,200 leaving a roost on Mar. 8th.
- M Bedford G.P., 10,000 at the end of August and 15,000 in September at roost.
- K Darenth 30,000 on Jan. 4th, 50,000 on Jan. 5th, 40,000 on Dec. 28th; Dartford Marsh, 5,000 in November and December; Joyden's Wood, 5,000 in November and December; Littlebrook G.P., 5,000 on Nov. 15th; Pett's Wood, 10,000 in January and February.

446 House Sparrow

Parties of 1,000 or more are given.

- E Harold Hill, 4,000 in November; Hornchurch, 2,000 on Feb. 24th, 3,000 on Nov. 8th at roost; Sewardstone, 1,000 in a cornfield in July.
- M Inner London: Goldborne Road off Ladbroke Road, a maximum of 2,000 at roost in a tree on Feb. 14th.
- K Dartford Marsh, 1,000 January to March and November and December; Littlebrook G.P., 1,000 on Nov. 15th.

448 Tree Sparrow

In both winter periods eight flocks of over 100 birds were seen with the highest numbers reported in the January to March period. Maximum of 160 from Jan. 31st to Feb. 7th at Beddington S.F. and 150 in late December at Hogsmill S.F. The only Inner London record is given.

- M Regent's Park, two on Dec. 17th.

451 Chaffinch

Westerley movements were noted almost daily from Oct. 13th to Nov. 1st and especially on Oct. 21st with a total of 1,947 noted at four localities and on Oct. 24th with a total of 2,775 at six localities. At least 15 flocks present in the winter months contained over 100 birds. The maxima were 350 at Rainham Marsh on Jan. 28th and 230 on Dec. 23rd. Of note was the flock of 122 at Banstead Heath on Mar. 9th all of which were males. Inner London records are given.

- M Holland Park, singles on Apr. 9th and three dates in May. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred.
- S London Bridge Station, 25 flew W on Oct. 22nd. Waterloo, 11 flew W on Oct. 8th.

452 Brambling

At the beginning of the year reported from some 48 localities from Jan. 1st to May 5th. Large parties were exceptional although numbers reached 200 on Jan. 13th and Feb. 14th at different localities and maxima of 100 were reached at two other localities. Autumn arrivals were first noted on Oct. 18th and in the following week but seem to have passed on to be replaced by new arrivals in November and especially during the severe weather in December but they were not as widespread as at the beginning of the year and the maximum was only 70. Details of all parties of 30 or more and Inner London records are given.

- E Epping Forest, 50+ on Apr. 5th (SBs). Rainham Marsh, 70 on Dec. 23rd, 50 on Dec. 26th (MKD).
- H Maple Cross S.F., present January to April, maximum 100 on Apr. 18th (MCRG).
- M Inner London: Regent's Park, a female on Apr. 8th; two on Oct. 23rd (SB,TD,JPW).
- S Ashted, up to 100 January to March (DP). Beddington S.F., 50 on Mar. 21st and 22nd; 40 on Dec. 6th (DAC,AV). Great Burgh, 50+ in February (BN). Walton-on-the-Hill, 200+ on Feb. 14th (CDK,POD). Woodmansterne, 200 on Jan. 13th (PJSn).

455 Greenfinch

Flocks of 100 or more were seen in at least 13 sites, usually in the period January to March and again from August onwards. Maxima of 800 near Bedmond (H) on Jan. 25th and 500+ on Aug. 16th at Beddington S.F. A total of 2,860 were ringed at Potters Bar during the year. Inner London records are given.

- M Holland Park, present in small numbers from February to May, maximum of six on Feb. 16th and from the end of October to December with a maximum of five on Dec. 22nd. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred. Islington, three at New River Walk on Feb. 25th.

456 Goldfinch

In contrast to other finches, Goldfinch peak numbers occur in the late summer and early autumn at the time of abundant food supplies. Flocks usually consist of many family parties. At least 12 flocks numbered over 100 birds, the maximum being 250 at Walthamstow

Marsh on Aug. 30th and the same number in Osterley Park on Sept. 5th. Inner London records are given.

- M Holland Park, singles on Apr. 3rd, May 8th and Oct. 21st. Islington, one at Market Road on one date in May and a pair at New North Road on June 12th.
- S St. Thomas's Hospital, one on May 11th.

457 Siskin

Only moderate numbers at the beginning of the year. Reported from 38 localities, the largest flocks being only 50 or 60. The last date was Apr. 12th. Autumn arrivals began with 50 at Sevenoaks G.P., on Oct. 10th apart from a single bird on Sept. 27th. Numbers did not reach 100 until Nov. 22nd and it was not until the onset of severe weather in December that spectacular numbers built up in the Colne and Lea valleys in both of which numbers of 500 were reached, the highest numbers ever known in the London Area. All flocks of 100 or more and Inner London records are given.

- E Waltham Abbey, 150 in December (TGL).
- H Batchworth Lake, 100 on Dec. 30th (HB). Cheshunt G.P., 555 on Dec. 12th, 200 on Dec. 13th (RL*n*). Croxley Mill, 100 on Dec. 6th (RAP). Maple Cross S.F., 130 on Dec. 20th (MCRG). Stocker's Lake, 150 on Nov. 22nd, 100 on Dec. 16th (JD*n*,RRD,RAP).
- M Bentley Priory, 100 on Dec. 26th (PAW). Near Denham, three flocks totalling 350 on Dec. 13th and four flocks totalling 270 on Dec. 28th (PN,JAH). Harefield Moor G.P., 150+ on Dec. 13th, 100 on Dec. 22nd, 500 on Dec. 26th, 300+ on Dec. 28th (IGJ,TRD,CIB,JE). Inner London: Hyde Park, one on Oct. 21st (DAB) and five on Dec. 6th (TAHS). Regent's Park, four on Feb. 24th, three on Feb. 25th; at least six on Oct. 28th (SB,TD,JPW).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 150 on Dec. 13th (AHH).

458 Linnet

In both winter periods flocks of over 100 were reported from at least 23 localities with the highest numbers in October and December. Of this only seven flocks were over 200. The maxima being 300+ at Amwell G.P. on Oct. 10th and 500 at Old Slade N.R. in December. Inner London records are given.

- M Old Oak Common, 50 on Jan. 1st. Regent's Park, 30+ on Oct. 27th, singles on May 5th and Dec. 18th.

459 Twite

- E Rainham Marsh, present from the beginning of the year until Mar. 22nd, monthly maxima 32 on Jan. 17th, 55 on Feb. 24th and 30 on Mar. 7th; present again from Nov. 7th until the end of the year, maxima of 15 on Nov. 28th and 120 on Dec. 26th during the severe winter (MKD, RG, NJI).

- S Barn Elms Res., one on a number of dates from Sept. 17th to Nov. 15th and on Dec. 23rd (PEB, RBH, PJS*n*, JPPW).

Only once before, in January and February 1975, have numbers exceeded 100, another effect of the severe weather. The Surrey record is the earliest ever seen in the London Area in the second winter period.

460 Redpoll

Flocks of 100 or more (fewer than in 1980), pairs breeding or present in the breeding season and Inner London records are given.

- E Hainault, eight to ten pairs bred; Havering, six pairs bred; 100 on Nov. 15th; Navestock, eight pairs bred; Coopersale, ten pairs bred (MKD).
- H Cheshunt G.P., 375 on Dec. 12th (RL*n*). Rye Meads S.F., four pairs in June (RMRG).
- M Alexandra Park, at least three pairs in May and June (NB*n*). Hampstead Heath, three pairs bred (KES). Highgate Ponds, a family party on June 28th (PJC*r*). Osterley Park, song flights noted throughout May and on July 1st (DGH). Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, maxima of 14 in May and 13 in October (DAB). Regent's Park, one to four from June 5th (SB,JPW).
- K Bromley Common, a pair with young on June 20th (GD). Petts Wood, 120 in Dec. 13th (KHP).
- S Epsom Common, two or three pairs on July 6th; a nest with five eggs on July 13th (WRI). Ham Fields, a nest with three young found on June 13th (JH*t*). Headley Heath, 100+ on Nov. 7th (RRG). Wimbledon Common, present in May and June (PEB); two flocks totalling 140 on Dec. 26th (JPPW).

463 Crossbill

- H Near Bayford, three females on Apr. 12th (BW). Hilfield Park Res., two females on Apr. 23rd (CIB).
- M New Barnet, a male on Apr. 23rd (HNHS).
- B Black Park, a male on June 14th (AVM,PN).
- K Lullingstone Park, a pair on Apr. 11th (WJW).
- S Ashted Common, 11 flying over, calling, on July 1st (WRI). Caterham, one flying over, calling, on Feb. 14th (SH).

469 Bullfinch

The largest number reported, Inner London records and a ringing recovery are given.

- M Kempton Park, a male, ringed as a juvenile on Sept. 22nd 1973, was controlled (re-trapped and released) on Aug. 25th. Inner London: Holland Park, one or two on six dates from Feb. 16th to May 31st and on six dates from Oct. 21st to Dec. 22nd. Regent's Park, a flock of 12 on Dec. 13th. Kensal Green cemetery, two pairs.
- K Keston, 35 on Apr. 12th.

470 Hawfinch

- E Brentwood, two on Feb. 1st; Hainault, 15 on Feb. 21st; five pairs in the breeding season; North Weald, seven in January and February; three or four pairs in the breeding season (MKD). Thorndon Park, one on Jan. 31st, two on Mar. 29th (AS).
- H Amwell G.P., a male carrying food on May 9th, singles on July 5th, Sept. 27th and Oct. 11th, three on Nov. 22nd (FCB,RBH,GJW). Box Wood near Hoddesdon, four on Mar. 29th (HNHS). Broxbourne Woods, five on June 18th (RBD). Northaw Great Wood, four pairs in May (HNHS). Panshanger, four on Mar. 30th, two on Apr. 6th and 8th (FCB).

- B Great Halings Wood, singles on Mar. 22nd and 25th, and two on the 26th (RRD,TRD). Oakend Wood, one on May 8th (JE).
- K Elmstead Woods/Sundridge Park, two on Apr. 4th (WJW). Bexley Wood, two on Apr. 15th (KHP). Lullingstone, a pair on May 3rd (SJG).
- S Banstead Wood, one on May 6th (PJSn). Bookham Common, one on Feb. 10th, a pair on May 2nd (LR,JJB). Caterham School, one on May 16th (SH). Harestone Valley, Caterham, three roosting in ivy on Jan. 28th (SJA). Pilgrim Fort Field Study Centre, a pair bathing at a pond on May 15th and a female on June 27th (SH).

493 Lapland Bunting

- S Barn Elms Res., one flying over, calling loudly, on Oct. 5th (PEB). The 11th record for the London Area this century.

494 Snow Bunting

- E Barking, one on Nov. 15th (KBT). Fisher's Green, one on Nov. 15th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, two or three on a number of dates from Jan. 1st to Mar. 8th (MKD,RG,NJI,SMŠ). Walthamstow Res., one on Nov. 14th (MKD).
- S Barn Elms Res., a male in flight on Oct. 24th (PEB). Beddington S.F., a male flew NW on Nov. 15th (AV).

496 Yellowhammer

There were 19 flocks reported where the total was over 50 birds, mostly in the winter months but 58 were still together on May 3rd at Bromley Common. Seven of the 19 flocks contained 100 or more and the maximum was a flock of 220+ at Halstead (K) on Feb. 8th. Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, two on Jan. 24th, singles on Nov. 17th and Dec. 13th and up to four from Dec. 15th until the end of the year.

506 Reed Bunting

At least 20 flocks numbered 50 birds or more in the winter months, including an incredible 500 in a mixed flock of buntings and finches at Ockenden (E) on Mar. 7th, this is the largest flock on record for the London Area. Inner London records are given.

- M Kensington Gardens, one on Oct. 16th. Regent's Park, singles on Mar. 5th, Oct. 22nd and Nov. 13th.

510 Corn Bunting

A roosting count of 120+ at Tolpits Lake (H) on Feb. 7th was the largest number reported. Most roost numbers peaked in February. At Walton Res., a flock of 60 feeding on grass protruding through six inches of snow on Dec. 13th is of note as the species is not usually met with in this area. No significant changes in the breeding status were reported. There were no Inner London records.

Ringling Report for 1981

J. D. Hook

Following a preliminary paper on 'Bird Ringing in the London Area' published in the last *London Bird Report* (45 : 91 – 103), the response from ringing groups and individual ringers has been very good. Many have submitted details of their most notable recoveries and controls for 1981. Interesting additions for 1980 include a second Manx Shearwater, ringed at Penally, Dyfed on Sept. 8th 1980 and recovered three days later at Plaistow, East London (ring read and bird released). As already recorded in the 1980 systematic list (*Lond. Bird Rep.* 45 : 16), another Manx Shearwater ringed at Tenby on the same date had been picked up at Cricklewood on the 12th, and four others were reported in the London Area during the first half of September 1980 in the wake of strong westerly gales.

The total number of birds ringed within the London Area during 1981 was well in excess of 30,000, although, without ringing totals being submitted by all ringers, it is impossible to give an exact number. Probably the most outstanding bird ringed during the year was a Melodious Warbler trapped at West Thurrock, Essex on May 26th, the first spring record of this species in the London Area.

Ringling of wintering Pochard and Tufted Duck in the Royal Parks has resulted in some remarkable recoveries in recent years, including a Pochard ringed in Kensington Gardens and recovered (shot or killed by man) east of the Urals near Koninskoye, Tyumen, U.S.S.R., a distance of 4,325 km. A Tufted Duck also ringed in Kensington Gardens was recovered near Muzhi, Tyumen and several other recoveries of this species have been from locations within the Arctic Circle. In 1981 the farthest duck recovered was a Tufted Duck, ringed in Regent's Park on Feb. 2nd 1981 and found dead (drowned in fishing net) at Torso, Vaasa, Finland on Aug. 4th, a distance of 1,822 km to the north-east. Another Tufted Duck, ringed in October 1977 in Kensington Gardens, was retrapped at Regent's Park in December 1980 before being shot near Amsterdam, Holland on Nov. 10th 1981, 369 km to the east.

The only bird-of-prey recovered was a female Sparrowhawk ringed at Kempton Park, Middx. on Sept. 2nd 1979 and found dead at Easthampstead, Bracknell, Berks. on Mar. 1st 1981.

Very few waders seem to have been recovered during the year, but all are worthy of mention. A Little Ringed Plover, ringed at Wisbech S.F., Norfolk on Aug. 29th 1980, was controlled at Rainham, Essex on Apr. 18th. Two foreign-ringed Dunlin were controlled on Feb. 28th at Swanscombe Marsh, Kent, one having been ringed at Sukajoki, Oulu, Finland in May 1977, 2,045 km to the north-east, and the other at Langenwerder, Insel Poel, German D.R. on Sept. 16th 1980, 806 km to the east. A Snipe ringed at Maple Cross S.F., Herts. on Sept. 23rd 1978 was found dead in Vendee, France on Mar. 6th, 520 km to the south. A victim of the December cold spell, a Woodcock was found in an exhausted condition in Regent's Park. After being cared for by the Birdkeeper, the bird was ringed and released in an apparently healthy state, but found dead a few days later in Kew Gardens. The outstanding wader recovery of the year was a Green Sandpiper ringed at Littlebrook, Kent on Oct. 26th 1969 and controlled at Swanscombe Marsh, Kent on Jan. 24th 1981, a new British longevity record for this species.

Gulls appear to have been ringed only during the last two months of the year. Fairly substantial numbers of Black-headed Gulls were caught in December at Littlebrook, Kent. Included in these catches were four foreign-

ringed birds, three of which had been ringed as pulli in Estonia, German F.R. and Poland. Analysis of previous years controls of Black-headed Gulls ringed as pulli and controlled at Thames sites in winter months showed a high percentage had been ringed at breeding colonies in the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. A Lesser Black-backed Gull found dead at King George V Res. on Sept. 12th had been ringed at Stirling, Scotland on Apr. 21st 1981. Recoveries of Common Terns ringed as pulli in the London Area are, for the most part, birds on their first migration or in their wintering quarters along the West African coast. In 1981 a first summer bird ringed at Rye Meads, Herts. on June 19th 1980 was found dead or dying at Noval, Mauretania on July 11th, 4010 km away.

A juvenile Turtle Dove ringed at Littlebrook, Kent on Aug. 16th was shot 30 days later at Fouras, Charente-Maritime, France 617 km to the south.

Autumn passage numbers of hirundines were reported as 'heavy' by the Dartford Ringing Group with above-normal numbers of Sand Martins and Swallows being caught on later dates than in recent years. A Swallow rescued from water at West Hyde, Herts. had been ringed locally at Maple Cross S.F. on July 15th 1979. The Rye Meads Ringing Group reported vast numbers of House Martins passing through the area during September and October, of which more than 1,000 were ringed. One ringed on Oct. 3rd was found dead or dying seven days later at Wimpole Hall, Cambs., while the only control in this large number was caught on Oct. 4th having been ringed six days previously at Shoreham-by-Sea, Sussex.

Comparatively few juvenile Nightingales of pairs breeding within the Society's boundaries are usually ringed. It was therefore a pity to learn that a juvenile ringed at Joyden's Wood, Kent soon after leaving the nest was killed by a car 15 days later at West Wickham, Kent. Three interesting Blackbird recoveries were reported. Two females, both ringed in the Dartford area in December 1979 and January 1980, were found dead in Finland, the December bird at Nuppulinna, Tuusula, Uusimaa on Aug. 11th, a distance of 1,834 km and the other at Sammi-Siikaihien, Turku-Pori on May 5th, some 1,765 km away. A third bird, of probable local origin, which had been ringed in its first year at Walton Res., Surrey on Oct. 24th 1971, was found dead or dying locally on Mar. 19th 1981, a longevity of 9 years 5 months. The only other foreign thrush recovery was a Redwing ringed at Headley Heath, Surrey on Nov. 27th 1980 and shot at Guitres, Gironde, France on Nov. 14th, 693 km to the south.

No foreign recoveries of any Sedge Warblers were reported. The only British recovery of more than 100 kilometres was of a bird ringed at Rye Meads on July 26th 1980 and controlled at Brandon Marsh near Coventry on May 15th. As more Reed Warblers breed and pass through the London Area than Sedge Warblers, it is not surprising that there are far more recoveries. Most ringing groups and individual ringers who have been catching Reed Warblers for any length of time will probably know of birds being recovered in Morocco, and this year was no exception, with one ringed at Rye Meads on Aug. 27th 1977 being recovered on May 26th, 1,956 km to the south, another ringed at Bedfont Quarry on Aug. 16th this year being recovered on Oct. 25th, a distance of 2,099 km. Two other foreign recoveries of this species were reported; one ringed at West Thurrock on July 27th 1977 was found dead near Caen, Calvados, France on May 12th, 259 km to the south and another ringed at Maple Cross S.F. on Aug. 31st this year was shot at San Sebastian, Spain on Oct. 4th, 934 km south-west.

The only Chiffchaff recovered was ringed at Bedfont Quarry on Apr. 12th and controlled at Witley Common, Surrey on Nov. 7th, a late date. No outstanding Willow Warbler recoveries were reported, but it was interesting

to note that seven were retrapped at Joyden's Wood, Kent, two having been ringed in 1978, two in 1979 and three in 1980.

In 1980 a Lesser Whitethroat ringed at Queen Mary G.P., Middx. on May 5th 1979, was found dead or dying at Bir El Abd, Northern Sinai, Egypt on Nov. 6th, 3,564 km to the south-east. This year another ringed at the same location on Aug. 11th 1979 was recovered when it 'hit glass' at Schiers, Graubunden, Switzerland on May 5th, 811 km to the south-east. Other interesting recoveries of summer visitors included a Garden Warbler ringed at Bedfont Quarry on Aug. 4th this year and taken alive at Brazatortas, Ciudad Real, Spain on Oct. 4th, 1,452 km to the south. A Blackcap also was 'captured' at Berceo, Logron, Spain on Oct. 20th, having been ringed at Queen Mary G.P. on Aug. 26th, a journey of 1,045 km. An interesting British recovery of this species occurred when a ring, found in a Sparrowhawk's nest after the young had fledged, proved to be that of a Blackcap ringed at Beachy Head, Sussex on Aug. 3rd.

Two Bearded Tits ringed at Stodmarsh, Kent, one as a nestling on Apr. 25th 1980 and the other as a female on Sept. 27th 1980, were controlled at West Thurrock on May 26th and 3rd respectively; both birds had also been controlled at Mucking, Essex on Apr. 1st. The farthest recovery of a Long-tailed Tit was 35 km from Wanstead S.F., Essex, to Wheathampstead, Herts., while a Blue Tit ringed at Copped Hall, Epping, Essex was controlled at Bedfont Quarry, a distance of 44 km.

Two Starlings ringed in 1977 were recovered abroad. One ringed at Rye Meads on Jan. 4th was found dead at Asebyberg, Kode, Sweden on May 5th, 1,017 km north-east. The other, ringed at Erith, Kent, on Jan. 23rd was found dead at Dannes-Neufchatel, Pas-De-Calais, France on Feb. 11th, a distance of 141 km. The farthest British recovery of this species was of a bird ringed at Potters Bar on Aug. 15th this year and killed by a cat at Chulmleigh, Devon on Dec. 1st.

There were two foreign Chaffinch recoveries. One ringed at Potters Bar on March 24th 1979 was found dead or dying near Alingsas, Alvasborg, Sweden on Aug. 1st, 1,073 km north-east. The other bird, ringed at Kempton Park on March 8th 1980, was controlled near Antwerpen, Belgium on April 9th, 292 km to the east. Details submitted of Bramblings caught at Maple Cross S.F. show how erratic numbers of this species can be from year to year. 401 birds have been ringed at this locality over eleven years, yet yearly totals over the last four years are 1978 - Nil, 1979 - 3, 1980 - 241 and 1981 - 46. In 1980 retrap data showed that 22 of the birds ringed remained in the area for four weeks or more, and five of the total ringed were retrapped in 1981. Catching dates indicate that the main influx occurs from late December, with some birds remaining until mid-April. There were two foreign recoveries in 1980 (see *Lond. Bird Rep.* 45 : 101).

Large numbers of Greenfinches were caught in ringers' gardens, mainly attracted by peanuts although some other baits proved to be just as successful. One ringer's total in 1981 for this species was 2,860 at Potters Bar. Data submitted with this total showed the principal passage period was between mid-March and early April. Peak numbers ringed were 210 on March 14th and 15th, 254 on March 28th and 29th, with a maximum of 275 on April 4th and 5th, numbers then declining, but on April 19th a bird was controlled which had been ringed near St Columb Major, Cornwall on Feb. 1st, a distance of 359 km.

A male Siskin ringed at Totton, Hants. on April 8th 1976 was controlled at Kempton Park on Jan. 17th. another, ringed at Kempton Park on Feb. 7th this year, was controlled at Balhain, Glen Urquhart, Inverness-shire on May 11th.

Redpoll recoveries from Belgium of birds ringed in this country during summer and autumn months far exceed those from any other country on the Continent. This year one ringed at Joyden's Wood, Kent on July 16th 1978 was controlled at Embourg Liege, Belgium on Feb. 15th, 391 km to the east and another ringed at Balsy-Thy, Brabant, Belgium on Nov. 16th 1980 was controlled at Dartford Heath, Kent on Sept. 6th, a distance of 314 km. One ringing group's British recoveries of this species ringed during the same season of the year and recovered in later years in the breeding season showed that 18 from a total of 21 were from eastern English counties as far north as Northumberland. Another ringed at the same location in April was controlled the following June in Ayrshire, the group's only recovery from the western side of Britain.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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The Decline of the Mute Swan in the London Area

P. J. Oliver

INTRODUCTION

Ogilvie (1981) reporting the national census of Mute Swans *Cygnus olor* in 1978 noted a "massive decline in the London Area and a virtual disappearance of the former large flocks on the Thames". The Mute Swan has also declined markedly elsewhere (Nature Conservancy Council, 1981), especially in the Midlands (Minton, 1971 and Hardman and Cooper, 1980) and in the Oxford area (Bacon, 1980), both breeding populations and non-breeding herds being affected.

This paper documents the decline in the London Area. Cramp (1957) reported on the population in the breeding season in 1955 and 1956. Data has been extracted from the winter wildfowl counts from 1956/57 to 1981/82 and from the *London Bird Reports* for each year from 1955; the latter did not, however, include any data on breeding numbers prior to 1970. The waters included in the winter wildfowl counts were listed by Homes (1976).

NON-BREEDING NUMBERS

Table 1 shows the maximum and mean counts for each winter season from 1956/57. These counts did not embrace the lower Thames, and the maximum count for that area in each calendar year from 1968 (when attention was first drawn to the numbers of water birds using this part of the river (Grant, 1970)) is shown in Table 2. There was a decline in the winter counts between 1956/57 and 1958/59 perhaps associated with major oiling incidents on the River Thames in both January and December 1956, but mean numbers had recovered to their earlier levels by 1959/60. The major decline commenced in 1961/62 when the mean count was 22% down on the preceding season, and apart from temporary reversals in 1956/66, 1970/71, 1971/72 and 1974/75, numbers declined in every season to a low point in 1977/78. In that season the mean count of 37 was only about one-eighth of the comparable figure in 1960/61. Numbers have recovered somewhat since, with a 51% increase in the mean count in 1980/81, but to a level still only about one-quarter of the earlier peak year. Even this recovery was not sustained in 1981/82 when the mean count dropped by 17%. By far the largest numbers used to occur on the upper Thames and it is the flocks in that area that have suffered the greatest decline. Thus in 1956/57 the peak count between Putney and Richmond was 426, but by 1971/72 these herds had completely gone and numbers on that stretch of the river have since scarcely reached double figures.

In 20 of the 26 winters under review, the peak count occurred in the first half of the winter, most often in October (ten winters) and November (six winters). The decline from the peak to the minimum count within each winter was too severe to be accounted for solely by mortality, averaging about 37% over the 26 winters and showing no material variation from winter to winter. Presumably many swans simply moved to other waters not covered by the census; some evidently returned later, as in 15 years (mainly in the 1950's and 1960's) there was a subsequent small increase in numbers (averaging about 8% of the peak count) after the low point had been reached, most often occurring in March.

Harrison and Grant (1976) documented the increase on the lower Thames between 1968 and 1973, prior to which numbers on that stretch of the river were insignificant. Although the increase corresponded with that of other wildfowl which clearly related to the improved food supply following a reduction in the pollution of the Thames, they suggested that this was not a direct cause of the increase in Mute Swans. The herds were attracted, instead, by spillage from grain wharves and, on their closure, from mollasine wharves. Nevertheless, these food supplies were not new and the coincidence of the timing of the increase and the later decline which has also been paralleled by other wildfowl following loss of habitat, suggests that some other features of the environment have been responsible for the changes in the numbers of swans. Harrison and Grant also suggested that the increase on the lower Thames was a result of a shift from the higher reaches where large numbers had previously occurred, but the data in Table 1 show that the major part of this decline had already occurred before the increase on the lower reaches took place. The origin of these birds is, therefore, in doubt.

Table 1. Maximum and mean counts of Mute Swans *Cygnus olor* in the London Area, based on monthly winter wildfowl counts.

	<i>Maxi- mum</i>	<i>Mean</i>		<i>Maxi- mum</i>	<i>Mean</i>
1956/57	479	315	1969/70	63	47
1957/58	315	286	1970/71	59	49
1958/59	314	248	1971/72	74	66
1959/60	371	314	1972/73	70	61
1960/61	385	318	1973/74	68	51
1961/62	294	247	1974/75	64	53
1962/63	282	224	1975/76	60	49
1963/64	242	192	1976/77	51	47
1964/65	183	150	1977/78	42	37
1965/66	240	181	1978/79	79	59
1966/67	115	98	1979/80	86	55
1967/68	111	94	1980/81	120	83
1968/69	82	63	1981/82	109	69

Table 2. Peak counts of Mute Swans *Cygnus olor* on the lower Thames.

1968	71	1975	219
1969	200	1976	82
1970	300	1977	114
1971	208	1978	153
1972	345	1979	72
1973	616	1980	51
1974	213		

BREEDING NUMBERS

Table 3 shows the numbers of pairs reported breeding in 1955 and 1956, when there were censuses (Cramp, 1957) and from 1970 to 1981. The data for the latter period, apart from 1978 when there was another census, are merely the sum of those records submitted to the ornithological recorders in the ordinary way, no special efforts having been made to locate breeding pairs. Two features emerge from Table 3; even though a full census was carried out in 1978, the 69 breeding pairs were not much above one-third of those found in 1956. Secondly, assuming that observer effort was similar in the remaining years, the data suggest that numbers were at a particularly low ebb from 1971

to 1974, but that they subsequently recovered. However, although there were twice as many nests reported in 1980 as in 1971, numbers fell again in 1981 and no clear trend is apparent over the past seven years. The earlier decline may not have been as marked as Table 3 suggests as in the Breeding Bird Survey of 1968 to 1972, Mute Swans were recorded breeding in 163 tetrads (Montier, 1977). The Atlas survey was not, of course, comparable with the annual surveys, not only because the number of pairs in a tetrad was not recorded, but also because it lumped data for five years. Cramp (op. cit.) found that there were many changes in localities in the breeding records between 1955 and 1956 even though the total recorded was similar in each year. Further evidence of a decline in numbers is available in Cramp (1972) who reviewed data from the annual swan-upping carried out in July each year on the Thames between central London and Henley (outside our area). His data cease after 1972, but show a decline of 58% in the total numbers of swans counted between 1957 and 1972. These counts do not reveal such a steady decline as the winter counts, with sharp increases in three years, especially in 1965 when the count was 23% up on the previous year. Cramp (1972) also gave details of the numbers of pairs with young counted between central London and Staines; between 1953 and 1962 there were, on average, 130 pairs and 488 young, but between 1963 and 1972 the comparable figures had declined to 63 pairs and 217 young, brood size thus having fallen as well as the number of pairs.

Table 3. Breeding pairs of Mute Swans *Cygnus olor* reported in the London Area. (1955 and 1956 from Cramp, 1957).

1955	173	1974	24
1956	188	1975	41
		1976	40
		1977	38
1970	44	1978	69
1971	23	1979	39
1972	24	1980	46
1973	26	1981	32

DISCUSSION

That the Mute Swan has suffered a massive decline in both wintering and breeding numbers in the London Area over the last two decades cannot be in doubt. The timing of the decline in the breeding population cannot be determined with any accuracy. On the basis of the Atlas survey, numbers may not have declined greatly by the early 1970's, but they had certainly done so by the time of the 1978 census. The regular monthly winter counts should be reasonably consistent from season to season, so the data in Table 1 can probably be relied on as an indication of the pattern of decline over the period under review. A decline in the non-breeding flocks (such as occurred on the upper Thames in the 1950s) might be expected to occur before the breeding population showed a serious decline. The greatest decline from one winter season to the next occurred in 1961/62 and 1966/67 (a 46% reduction), but neither season, nor the immediately preceding ones were characterised by cold winters. Equally, neither the really harsh winters of 1962/63 and 1978/79, nor the immediately succeeding seasons showed exceptionally sharp declines (indeed, there was an increase in 1978/79). Hard winters, therefore, seem not have to have contributed to the decline. The rate of decline was much greater than in the Midlands where Minton (1971) reported a decline of 46% in the peak counts of herds between 1961/62 and 1970/71. Over the same period the decline in the maximum winter counts in the London Area was 80%.

The reductions elsewhere in England have been attributed to greater human disturbance and consequent degradation of the habitat, especially from lead poisoning caused by weights lost by fishermen and more regular and extensive clearance of weed, either deliberately or a result of increased traffic from motor boats (Nature Conservancy Council, 1981). The data collected by the Nature Conservancy Council do not distinguish between the LNHS Area and waters elsewhere, but the data it collected for the River Thames show clearly the major effect of lead poisoning. Out of 65 post mortems carried out on swans from the Thames, 43 deaths (68%) were attributed to lead poisoning, but this increased to 83% of deaths reported below Windsor. Similarly, blood samples from live birds showed progressively higher lead content coming down stream from Windsor. The remainder of the deaths on the Thames were attributed to a variety of causes: collisions, other injuries, infections, killed by man or not determined. It was also noted that the incidence of lead poisoning was much higher where concentrations of weed were lower and where boating activity was higher. Although, therefore, there seems little doubt that a main cause of the decline in the London Area must be lead poisoning there may be other unidentified reasons. The initial increase on the lower Thames took place when numbers had already declined upstream, so it seems likely that the habitat off the wharves frequented by the swans was not then severely polluted by lead. This also seems probable as access for fishermen onto industrial wharves is more difficult than onto tow paths upstream where, from personal observation, there seem to be much greater concentrations of fishermen. Yet, even on the lower reaches swan numbers fell drastically in the mid-1970's and although the prime habitat at Woolwich was reclaimed this was never of such importance to them as to other wildfowl. Further evidence that factors other than lead poisoning may be relevant is suggested by the apparent recent increase in winter numbers. While this might merely indicate less lead pollution and/or boating, this seems improbable.

Cramp's (1972) review of swan-upping covered 150 years, and this showed substantial fluctuations over that period, with the highest numbers being recorded just prior to the years covered by the present review. It seems, however, that numbers reached an all time low in the late 1970's, and there must be concern that human pressures may restrict the chance of this familiar and attractive species following its previous history of moving into another period of increase. Certainly it seems doubtful that we will ever again witness the "one or two thousand swans upon the river Thames" recorded, according to Ticehurst (1957), by the Venetian ambassador in 1496.

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Birds of Rainham Marsh— Ten Years On

M. K. Dennis

INTRODUCTION

The multi-coloured smoke that wafts over the desolate, mud-filled landscape belies the fact that Rainham Marsh is one of the major wetland habitats in the home counties. It has been enhanced over the last two decades by extensive man-made habitat changes. These have been well documented by Noble (1971). This paper brings up to date the recent developments.

SETTING THE SCENE

Rainham Marsh lies about ten miles east of St. Paul's on the northern shore of the River Thames. As well as the low lying pastureland to the south of Rainham village, it includes, for this paper, Aveley and Wennington Marshes between the River Ingrebourne and Mar Dyke. Its northern boundary is formed by the London to Tilbury railway. Immediately to the west and east, industrial and urban developments extend along the Thames. Extending north towards Berwick Ponds, the land is mainly agricultural.

For centuries the marsh was a low lying wetland area on the floodplain of the River Thames. However in 1959, the Port of London Authority began pumping mud, dredged from the Thames, into specially constructed lagoons. Initially the area closest to the river was pumped, and this is still an emergency pumping site. In 1968 mud and silt was pumped onto seven new lagoons south of the railway line (numbered 1 to 7 on the map). As one lagoon dried out so another was pumped, creating a continuous variety of wetland habitat for ducks and waders in particular. Bulldozers and earthmoving machines returned in 1980 to create two new lagoons, south-east of the 1968 workings. Pumping operations are expected to begin again in late 1981. The remaining parts of the marsh are made up of an industrial complex and rubbish tip, War Department ranges, and the original low pasture and remnant saltings.

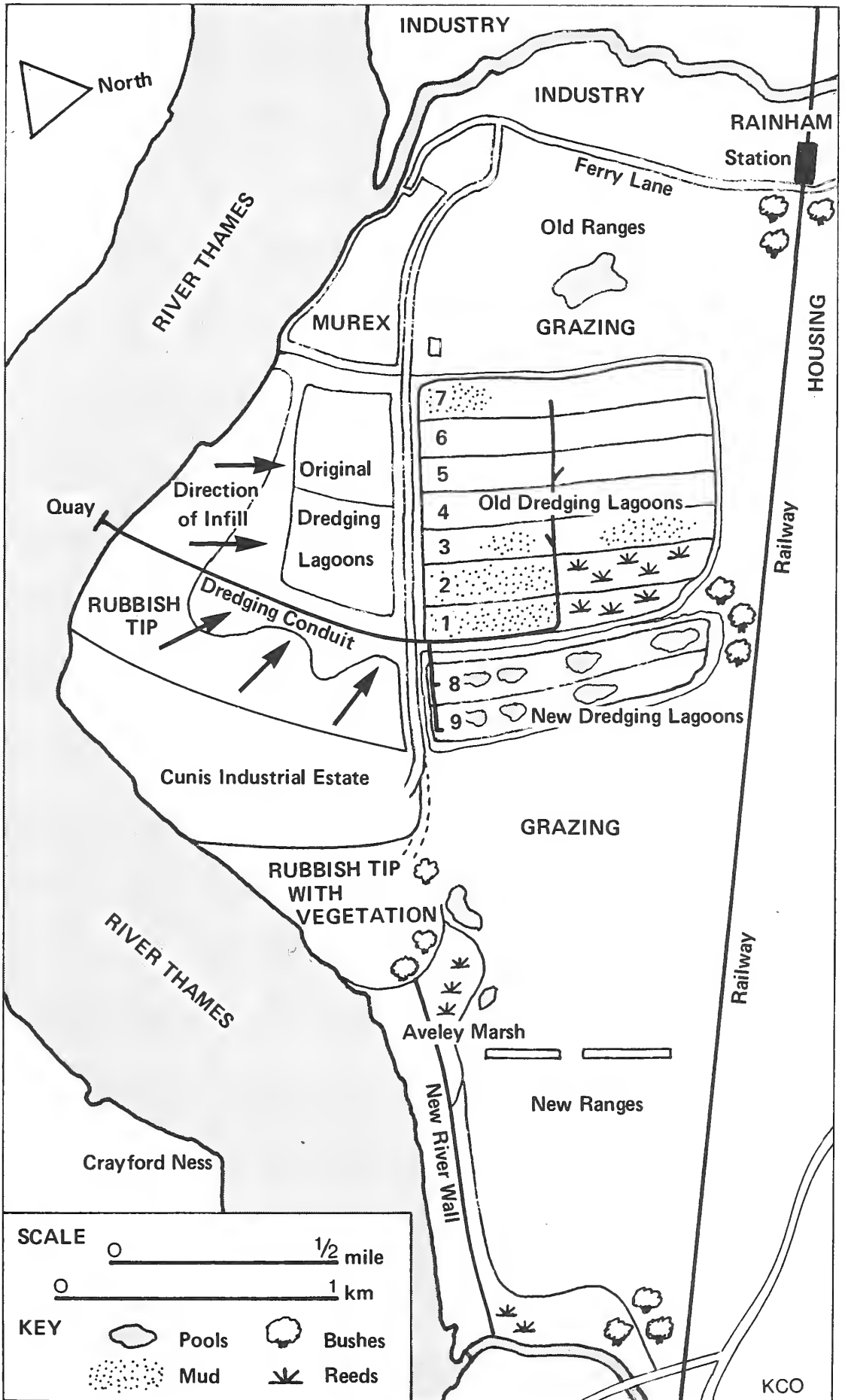
THE HABITATS

1. The Firing Ranges

Since the mid-1970s only the eastern ranges have been used by the Army. The land is made up of wet pasture cut by a complex network of water channels. Small reedbeds occur where drainage is poor, and tall rank vegetation grows around the targets. Older targets and blockhouses on the western ranges were removed in 1980, Stock Doves and Kestrels losing a nesting and roosting site. Apart from the noise when firing is in progress the birds appear undisturbed by the Army. Short-eared Owls regularly hunt over this area, and Curlew, Whimbrel and raptors occur on passage. Lapwing and Redshank breed on the quieter parts while in the winter Redwing and Fieldfare numbers often reach three figures.

In recent years Whinchat and Stonechat have bred on the edge of the ranges while small numbers of Reed Warblers and Yellow Wagtails breed in the wetter areas. Stock Doves and probably Little Owls still breed in the targets and blockhouses on the eastern ranges.

(*Opposite*) Fig. 1. Map of Rainham Marsh showing extent of main habitat features.



2. The Pastureland

This grazed grassland is the haunt of typical open area species. Skylark and Meadow Pipit are the common breeding birds, while in winter, Short-eared Owls, Hen Harriers and the occasional flock of geese inhabit the pasture. Where small pools are formed, waders gather, and have included flocks of up to 1,000 Dunlin and smaller numbers of Redshank, Ruff, Lapwing, both Ringed plovers and Oystercatchers.

3. The Lagoons

These form the major habitat at Rainham, and as a result of their constant changes of vegetation, have a wide variety of breeding and visiting species. In their freshly created state they are rather barren and hold little more than the pastureland species mentioned above, together with roosting gulls. Once the mud is pumped, changes occur rapidly. While the land is settling and the water level is still high, ducks and gulls arrive.

As the water continues to evaporate or drain back into the River Thames, so small brackish pools develop. These are the main haunt of waders during the autumn, the mud edges being particularly attractive to Dunlin, Curlew, Sandpiper, Ringed Plover, other passage waders, gulls and Shelduck. As the mud dries it is clothed in a mantle of grass and rushes. The pools are thus edged with vegetation, and provide a rich habitat for Green and Wood Sandpiper, Teal, and numerous passage birds. Once the mud has dried, a dense carpet of sea aster, with the occasional Buddleia bush, provides a winter refuge for finch and bunting flocks, while in summer Reed Bunting and Reed Warbler breed. Where the dry mud is exposed, increasing numbers of Little Ringed Plover gather during late July and August. Gravel accumulations at the pipe outlets provide nest sites for both ringed plovers and the occasional Oystercatcher. The lagoon banks are an important winter feeding and roosting area for wildfowl, in particular Wigeon, Pintail, Mallard, Teal and Shelduck.

4. The Fleets and River Thames

Most of the water pumped onto the lagoons returns to the Thames by way of numerous water channels. These, together with the drainage ditches, cut across the pastureland. Reed and Sedge Warblers breed in the tall dense vegetation that quickly clothes the banks of these waterways. Pollution has been a problem, with toxic waste leeching down into the fleets from the nearby industrial complex.

During the past two decades, the Thames has become an important wintering site for waders and duck. This was highlighted in the severe winter of 1978/79, when the lagoons became frozen for a short time. Both dabbling and diving duck together with eight species of wader were forced down onto the river and its foreshore. Until late 1979, wintering flocks of up to 150 Wigeon, 200 Shelduck, 100 Mallard and 1,000 Dunlin have been observed. Common Sandpipers regularly winter in the Coldharbour Point area. Since 1979, work has been in operation on the new river wall, disturbing the high tide duck roosts in particular.

Two small reed beds hold little more than Reed Warblers in summer, but in winter small numbers of Bearded Tits and larger parties of Reed and Corn Buntings may be found. Small pools inside the new river wall provide suitable habitat for Ruff, Water Pipit and Snipe.

5. The Rubbish Dump

As part of the new flood prevention scheme, the rubbish tip has been extended along the whole length of the river, from Coldharbour Point to the factory area. Infilling has already begun behind this, covering the older

lagoons. Large flocks of scavenging gulls and crows are attracted by the mounds of decaying rubbish. Kestrels are regular hunters, and where vegetation has returned Stonechats, Whitethroats, Yellow Wagtails and both species of partridge breed. The original tip site, east of Coldharbour Point is now well covered by grassland plants, bushes and even small trees, which provide nest sites for Magpies, and roosts for owls. Shelduck probably breed in the numerous rabbit burrows in this area, the young are often seen on the nearby Thames.

6. The Industrial Areas

Rainham Marsh is fringed by a variety of industrial development, and there has been much recent rebuilding and expansion in the Ferry Lane area. Undaunted by disturbance, Stonechats have consolidated their position as breeding birds, and had increased to at least five pairs by 1980. Most of these nest (as did the first in 1969) along the factory fences and on waste areas within the factory complexes. Black Redstarts possibly breed in the more remote parts, while Grey and Yellow Wagtails, Kestrels and Wrens inhabit this rather seedy environment.

BIRDS OF RAINHAM MARSH

The following list is an updated and expanded version of that given in Noble (1971). I have drawn from the *London Bird Reports* up to 1979, plus my own personal observations and counts. I have also had welcome help from the small band of Rainham 'regulars' who have shared the mud, smell and the birds with me.

Little Grebe: Up to six most autumns. One or two pairs probably breed.

Great Crested Grebe: Bred until the early 1960s, now a very scarce visitor.

Red-necked Grebe: One on the Thames in March 1979, during a marked influx.

Slavonian Grebe: Occasional visitor.

Black-necked Grebe: Occasional visitor, one Feb. 5th to 8th 1978.

Fulmar: One over the Thames and saltings on May 27th 1979.

Cormorant: Only two records before 1970, is now an increasing visitor to the Thames, where up to 12 are present from September to April. There are also a few mid-summer records of birds flying over.

Shag: One with Cormorants on the River Thames on Dec. 8th 1979.

Grey Heron: Up to 15 on the lagoons in July and August, and up to six at other times of the year. There is probably some interchange with the large early autumn gathering at West Thurrock.

Purple Heron: One on May 26th 1978.

Spoonbill: One in October 1961, and five between July 27th and Sept. 6th 1969.

Mute Swan: One pair occasionally breeds, most recently on the old lagoons. Otherwise an occasional visitor, with up to 30 on the Thames.

Bewick's Swan: Two in March 1968.

Whooper Swan: Four on Jan. 27th 1963 and the same number on Jan. 22nd 1979.

Pink-footed Goose: Three during hard weather on Feb. 18th 1979.

White-fronted Goose: A few skeins are seen in some winters. Up to 41 frequented the pastureland near the firing ranges from Feb. 23rd to Mar. 4th 1979.

Canada Goose: One or two have been seen in recent years.

Barnacle Goose: A wild flock of 13 with White-fronted Geese from Feb. 23rd to Mar. 4th 1979.

Brent Goose: Singles on Oct. 17th 1971, Feb. 11th 1975, Jan. 5th and Oct. 6th 1975.

- Shelduck:** Has increased as both a breeding and wintering bird, with up to three pairs raising young in recent years. Broods are seen on the Thames in July and August, and wintering numbers have exceeded 500. Normally present in strength from November to March, but summering non-breeding birds have increased in the last three years.
- Wigeon:** Up to 150 have wintered mainly on the Thames and its foreshore between Coldharbour Point and Mar Dyke, although in mild winters fewer than 50 are present. In the last two years small numbers have come onto the marsh itself. Monthly maxima during 1979 were: January—25; February—150; March—60; April—8; December—30.
- Gadwall:** Numbers have shown an increase recently including 58 in February 1979. Normally present from October to March, but two pairs summered in 1980 and possibly bred.
- Teal:** One or two pairs often summer on the lagoons and possibly breed. Otherwise a common winter visitor, with up to 4,000 in some recent years. Three figure counts are present in August, building gradually to over 1,000 in December and the new year. Small numbers are seen on the Thames, mainly during hard weather.
- Mallard:** Several pairs breed and up to 200 present at other times of the year, mainly on the Thames.
- Pintail:** An increasing species with a regular build up on the lagoons from December to February of over 100 birds. Occasionally flocks have exceeded 150 (on Dec. 23rd 1980 for example), and over 300 in December 1978 is the largest number to date. Very few present between April and October but a pair were seen on June 12th 1975.
- Garganey:** Small numbers on spring passage, from March to May, with a few summering birds in some years. A few occur in August and September but is far less frequent than in the 1960s.
- Shoveler:** An increasing winter visitor to the lagoons. The build up begins in November with peak numbers in December and February. The largest number occurred in 1977 with 150 present between January and March. Summering birds present in most years and probably breed.
- Pochard:** Very few are seen on the marsh, but small flocks, sometimes exceeding 100 are present on the Thames.
- Tufted Duck:** As with Pochard, a few are seen on the Thames during the winter. A recent development has been the presence of a small moulting flock on the lagoons in the late summer.
- Scaup:** Occurs on the Thames, mainly in the early part of the year and usually during hard weather. Maximum number, 32 on Jan. 2nd 1974.
- Long-tailed Duck:** One on the Thames on Oct. 22nd and 28th 1972.
- Goldeneye:** An occasional visitor.
- Red-breasted Merganser:** Several birds flew down river in February 1979.
- Goosander:** One on Jan. 9th 1970.
- Marsh Harrier:** Females, hunting over the lagoons on Aug. 27th 1977, Aug. 19th 1978, singles on May 15th, July 28th, Aug. 31st, and Oct. 6th and 7th 1979, Aug. 29th and 30th 1980.
- Hen Harrier:** Has occurred in seven of the last ten years, with individuals making protracted stays recently. Male on Dec. 14th 1971, female on Oct. 26th, Nov. 3rd and 17th 1974, male on Nov. 10th 1974, female on Oct. 19th and 25th 1975, male on Nov. 27th 1977, up to two females from Dec. 20th 1978 to April 1979, one female from Oct. 23rd 1980 into 1981, was joined by a second female from Berwick Ponds from time to time.
- Sparrowhawk:** Odd birds seen on passage in some years.
- Buzzard:** One on Oct. 3rd 1962 is the only record.
- Rough-legged Buzzard:** One on Oct. 18th 1973, plus some unconfirmed sightings in recent years.

- Lesser Kestrel:** A male on the lagoons from July 31st to Aug. 3rd 1974.
- Kestrel:** At least five pairs breed, and up to 20 have been present during August to December in recent years.
- Hobby:** Singles in 1968 and on May 4th 1978.
- Peregrine:** Single birds on Apr. 24th 1962, Sept. 11th and 15th 1978, and Aug. 6th and Oct. 18th 1980.
- Red-legged Partridge:** One or two pairs breed in the dryer lagoons.
- Grey Partridge:** At least three pairs breed. At other times of the year coveys over 12 are often seen.
- Quail:** Occurs during late summer in some years, but less frequently now than in the past.
- Pheasant:** Probably a recent colonist, with at least two pairs resident in the dense sea aster growth of the lagoons.
- Water Rail:** A few winter and probably occur at other times of the year, but is always very elusive.
- Moorhen:** A few are present along the fleets and on the flooded lagoons.
- Coot:** As with the Moorhen, a few are always present.
- Oystercatcher:** Single birds bred in 1971, 1973, 1976, and 1977, while pairs held territory in other recent springs. Usually present in small numbers between late March and September, but odd birds have been seen along the Thames in recent winters. Largest counts occurred in 1979 with 16 on May 3rd and 12 on May 17th.
- Avocet:** Has been seen with increasing frequency, with one or two birds present in most years between February and September/October. A single bird was seen from Dec. 9th to 16th 1978, while in 1979, an exceptional year, two were seen in March, one in July, two from Aug. 11th to 13th, increasing to 15 on the 19th, two on Sept. 2nd and five on Sept. 9th.
- Stone-Curlew:** One on the dry lagoons from Oct. 2nd to 6th 1978.
- Little Ringed Plover:** Increasing both as a breeding bird, and passage visitor. At least four pairs breed or attempt to do so on the dryer lagoons. A build up of passage birds begins in mid-July and quickly reaches a peak later in the month or early August. In recent years these counts have exceeded 60 birds and have probably been the highest on record in Britain. A gathering of 91 in three areas of dry lagoon on July 31st 1980, is the maximum count to date. Numbers remain in double figures, although at a much lower level until late September, after which only single birds remain until mid-October. Small numbers occur on spring passage but never more than 25.
- Ringed Plover:** An increasing species, with at least three pairs breeding along the Thames on the lagoons. The autumn build up begins later than in the previous species, from late July to a peak of 150 to 250 by late August and early September. Numbers quickly decline after this, but mid-winter high tide roosts can top 150 (in February 1979 for example). A small spring passage occurs in April or May, but never more than 100 birds are seen.
- Kentish Plover:** One on July 1st 1962, a female in April 1970, one Sept. 2nd to 11th 1974, and one on Aug. 19th and 25th 1979.
- Golden Plover:** Increasing, in recent years small numbers have wintered on the pastureland with Lapwing, and odd birds have occurred on the lagoons on passage.
- Grey Plover:** Seen most years, usually in April and May on spring passage and from late July to November on autumn passage. Five were seen in early June 1977, while up to eight were present in October 1979. Occasionally one or two winter along the Thames foreshore.
- Lapwing:** Present all months. At least ten pairs breed, but number of young reared is small, due mainly to predation. Flocks of several hundred are

frequent outside the breeding season, from late July onwards and have reached 2,000 on Oct. 29th 1977, and 1,000 on Dec. 28th 1973.

Knot: Occurs in small numbers from March to May and from July to October, but usually less than three records in a year. Largest recent flocks have included five on July 31st increasing to nine on Aug. 22nd 1978, and four on July 18th 1979.

Sanderling: Occurs in small numbers most years, usually in May and August/September. Most recent records are from the wet lagoons and include a large count of 26 on March 29th 1980.

Little Stint: Seen on autumn passage each year, but the numbers and timing of arrival varies considerably from year to year. Most are found with flocks of Dunlin on the mud edges of the lagoons, and usually arrive in late July and reach a peak in September or early October. A heavy movement in 1978 included gatherings of 50 on Sept. 9th, 34 on Sept. 13th and 50 on Sept. 17th. Single birds occasionally winter with Dunlin, while a few are seen in some springs, from April to June. Maximum numbers on autumn passage are given below.

1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
4	0	14	9	20	32	4	50	8	10

Temminck's Stint: A wintering bird from 1970 remained until Apr. 19th 1971, one was present on Aug. 5th 1972, two from Aug. 10th to Sept. 10th 1974, and one or two were present from May 24th to June 7th 1977.

Nearctic Waders **Western Sandpiper**, one from July 21st to 23rd 1973.

Baird's Sandpiper, one on Sept. 3rd 1977.

Pectoral Sandpiper, one from Sept. 30th to Oct. 3rd 1971.

Solitary Sandpiper, one from Sept. 1st to 6th 1974.

Curlew Sandpiper: Varying numbers pass through during autumn passage, usually reaching a peak in late August and September. A few are sometimes present during late July and early October, while odd birds are irregularly recorded in late spring. Maximum numbers in recent years have included 50 to 70 from Sept. 3rd to 17th 1978, 25 on Sept. 2nd 1979, and 19 on July 26th 1980.

Purple Sandpiper: One in September 1969.

Dunlin: Present throughout the year, but common only in winter and on passage. Winter numbers have continued to increase, with high tide flocks of over 3,000 present from November to early March. As the tide rises, parties of up to 300 pass from the Thames foreshore to the wetter lagoons, returning as the water level falls. On passage up to 50 birds are encountered from July to late October, and again in April and May, while a few birds may summer.

Ruff: Another increasing wader, that may be seen most of the year, although very few in May and June. A wintering flock of up to 60 birds is usually present on the wet pastures or lagoons, numbers building during November to reach a peak in late December. Passage birds are most numerous in the autumn when up to 40 are seen between late July and early October. Recent maxima have included 14 on July 18th 1977, 32 on Aug. 22nd 1978, 26 on Aug. 25th 1979, and 36 on Aug. 16th 1980. A few mid-summer birds have included males in full breeding plumage.

Jack Snipe: Occurs from late September to March, with odd records during spring passage. Up to ten together have been seen usually on the dryer lagoons.

Snipe: Winter numbers along the Thames or on the flooded lagoons can exceed 100, particularly in hard weather. A few are seen at other times of the year, but have included displaying birds recently, and a pair or two probably nest in some years.

Black-tailed Godwit: Passage birds are seen in most years, usually from April to June and July to September. Ten on July 13th 1979 is the largest recent party.

Bar-tailed Godwit: As with the last species, passage birds are present in May, and again from late July to September. One or two birds have occurred in winter, usually along the Thames foreshore.

Whimbrel: A spring and early autumn passage migrant in small numbers.

Curlew: A few are seen most years, but is less frequent than formerly. August is the favourite month, with odd birds in spring and in the winter.

Spotted Redshank: Although a few are seen in spring, it is as an autumn (July to September) migrant that most are encountered. Numbers are usually small, maximum of eight in September 1978.

Redshank: At least eight pairs breed on the lagoons and wet pasture, and is present throughout the year. Small numbers pass through on spring and autumn passage, while high tide roosts often exceed 100 in winter.

Marsh Sandpiper: One in August 1963.

Greenshank: A regular passage migrant from early July to early October. Peak numbers occur in late July and early August, and again in early September. Up to 15 have been seen in recent years, but an exceptional count of 53 was made on July 26th 1980, as small parties moved onto the marsh ahead of a thunder storm. A few are seen on spring passage, but never more than six.

Green Sandpiper: Has occurred in all months, but is usually met with as an autumn passage migrant. Up to 70 have occurred in recent years, between late June and early October, with most between July and early September. Up to six regularly winter, while a few are seen on spring passage.

Wood Sandpiper: Principally a regular autumn migrant in small numbers, from late July to September. Numbers rarely exceed five, and single birds have been recorded in May.

Common Sandpiper: A common migrant, particularly in autumn, when over 70 are present in some years. Numbers begin to build up in late July reaching a peak in August, quickly subsiding in September. A few winter along the Thames foreshore between the factory area and Mar Dyke, while up to ten occur during spring passage in April and May.

Turnstone: Small numbers are present on the dry lagoons or along the Thames foreshore in late April and May, and again in late July to September.

Red-necked Phalarope: One on June 18th 1978.

Grey Phalarope: One in August 1964.

Arctic Skua: Two on Sept. 16th 1970, one on Sept. 30th 1978.

Mediterranean Gull: An increasing visitor, with one in November 1969, one on May 21st 1977, one on Dec. 3rd 1978, and one on June 21st 1980.

Little Gull: A few are seen most years usually between late July and early September. Outside this period, one was present on Dec. 7th 1978, one summered in 1979, and another was present on June 7th 1980.

Black-headed Gull: Although a few are present throughout the year, numbers reach a peak during the winter. As well as a feeding flock of several thousand on the rubbish tip, up to 10,000 use the lagoons and ranges for roosting. Recent counts have included 7,500 in January 1980 and 3,000+ in December 1980.

Common Gull: Mainly a winter visitor and passage migrant, occurring in smaller numbers during the spring and summer. Counts rarely exceed one thousand but 1,550 were present on Jan. 20th 1980.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Up to 500 occur on autumn passage, which lasts from late July to late October. Up to 1,200 were present in November/

December 1975, but wintering numbers are usually much lower. Also present as a migrant during the spring, and single birds occasionally summer.

Herring Gull: Second most frequent gull, with up to 3,000 wintering from November to April. Small numbers also occur at other times of the year.

Glaucous Gull: An increasing, but scarce winter visitor, with only two years (1975 and 1980) without a record since 1970. Most are seen with the main feeding flock of gulls from late October to mid-April, but one was present from April 27th to May 1st 1976.

Great Black-backed Gull: This is the scarcest of the five 'common' gulls, with rarely more than 250 wintering at any one time. Maximum counts have been 500 in November/December 1975 and 800 on Jan. 1st 1980.

Kittiwake: Singles on Aug. 12th 1967, and June 10th 1978.

Sandwich Tern: Has been seen in seven of the past ten years, usually one or two but there were seven on May 7th 1977. Occurs between April and September with August (four records of six birds) the peak month.

Common/Arctic Tern: Increasing numbers are seen on the Thames, and also from time to time on the wet lagoons. Small numbers pass through in April and May, but movements on the Thames in August and September have included counts of 52 on Aug. 21st 1971, 175+ on Sept. 16th 1974, 45+ on Sept. 4th 1977 and 70+ on Aug. 31st 1979.

Arctic Tern: One on June 7th 1975, but some of the above may be of this species.

Little Tern: Two on Aug. 19th 1973, two on Sept. 16th 1974, three on Aug. 4th and two on Aug. 18th 1979.

Black Tern: Small numbers are seen most years on the Thames, usually in August and September, but also on the lagoons in May. Double figure counts have included, 19 on Aug. 21st 1971, 30 to 40 on Aug. 19th 1973, and ten on Aug. 18th 1979.

Stock Dove: About four pairs breed in and around the range targets. Otherwise up to 100 occur during the winter.

Woodpigeon: Small numbers occur on the ranges during autumn and winter. A few may breed in the woodland near Mar Dyke.

Collared Dove: Seen with increasing frequency, usually single birds flying over, recent records have included pairs in the breeding season.

Turtle Dove: One or two pairs breed along Mar Dyke, while migrants are often seen on the lagoons and ranges, usually in the autumn.

Cuckoo: Present from April to late September, juvenile birds are frequently seen in August.

Barn Owl: One pair bred in 1972 and possibly in 1971. Apart from these records, only occasional singles in recent years, with very few observations since 1976.

Little Owl: At least two pairs probably breed either on the ranges or in the industrial complex along Ferry Lane. Sometimes seen at dusk along the railway line.

Long-eared Owl: Singles on Mar. 15th and Nov. 30th 1980. Possibly associated with the roosts at Dagenham Chase and Dartford Marsh.

Short-eared Owl: A regular winter visitor, from mid-October to mid-April. Numbers have increased over the ten years, with a greater tendency towards wintering, although overall numbers do vary from year to year. Passage birds are obvious in October and November, and again in March. Up to seven can occur in a normal winter, but in 1978/79, an exceptional influx resulted in 14 being present (monthly maxima given below). Late birds were seen in late April 1979, and one was still present on May 27th 1979.

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
1978/79	3	10	10	9	14	7	4	1
1979/80	—	5	2	4	6	1	3	—

Swift: A common summer visitor.

Kingfisher: A regular winter visitor in small numbers, with occasional birds summering in recent years.

Skylark: Wintering numbers can exceed three hundred, while hard weather movements early in 1979 probably approached 1,000. Otherwise a common breeding species and passage migrant.

Sand Martin: Although first arrivals are often seen at the end of March, and spring passage continues until the end of May, numbers are usually low (under 100). A pre-migration build up usually takes place in August, and counts at this time have included 700 on Aug. 20th and 1,000+ on Aug. 27th 1978 and 1,000 in late August 1979. Most birds have gone by early October, but some stragglers linger over the lagoons until the end of the month, the latest being seen on Oct. 29th 1976.

Swallow: At least 12 pairs breed in the disused blockhouses along Mar Dyke. Feeding flocks are frequently seen over the lagoons, from early April to the end of October. Peak passage occurs in September and early October, but rarely exceeds 500. Two late birds were seen on Nov. 6th 1977.

House Martin: A non-breeding summer visitor, in small numbers until October, when over 20 may be present. In some years birds linger to the end of the month, and two late birds were seen on Nov. 7th 1976.

Tree Pipit: In recent years has been noted with migrating Meadow Pipit flocks, usually singly and most often in early October.

Meadow Pipit: A common resident, with over 20 pairs breeding. Numbers are augmented by passage birds in March/April and October, while wintering numbers can be upwards of 150.

Rock Pipit: Up to ten birds winter along the Thames, with occasional birds seen on the marsh itself. Numbers may increase again following completion of flood defence work.

Water Pipit: Singles are seen in some winters, but numbers have declined since the 12 in March 1971. Small riverside pools, a favourite site in the late 1960s have largely disappeared since 1975.

Yellow Wagtail: Up to 20 pairs breed mainly on the dry lagoons and pasture, but also on the vegetated rubbish tip. First birds are usually seen in the early part of April, while the last birds remain until early October. A common autumn passage migrant, with up to 100 present from July to September. A late bird was seen on Nov. 22nd 1980. Blue-headed (*flava*) Wagtails are occasionally seen in spring, while single males have summered in recent years, possibly paired with normal yellow females.

Grey Wagtail: Occurs in small numbers on autumn passage in October, a few winter and has possibly bred.

Pied Wagtail: A small breeding population. Numbers increasing at passage times, with over 100 recorded in March/April and in the autumn. A winter roost has recently become established at the sewage works along the River Ingrebourne, and pre-roost gatherings on the marsh may exceed 150 birds.

White Wagtail: A scarce passage migrant, most frequently encountered in spring, numbers involved are small, and single birds have been seen in October.

Wren: At least ten pairs breed, while during the winter it becomes widespread in all habitats, even down on the Thames foreshore.

Duncock: A few pairs breed in the more vegetated parts of the marsh.

Robin: Over 15 pairs are present, mainly near to man-made structures.

Black Redstart: Although it has bred in the factory area in the past, recent evidence is hard to come by. Small numbers pass through, while some occasionally winter.

Redstart: A passage migrant in very small numbers.

Whinchat: A spring and autumn migrant in small numbers. Has declined as a breeding species, and now only nests occasionally. However at least two pairs probably bred in 1980. Pairs in the breeding season in recent years shown.

1970	1972	1974	1976	1978	1980
1	2+	2	-	-	2

Stonechat: First bred in recent years in 1969, and breeding numbers have slowly increased since. Most pairs rear at least two, sometimes three broods, and small family parties are a common sight in late autumn. A slight passage occurs in October, when up to a dozen may be seen. Winters in small numbers. Pairs in the breeding season shown below.

1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
1	1	1	1	2	4	4+	5	4	4+

(At least six pairs, possibly seven, present in 1981)

Wheatear: A frequent spring migrant, arriving in late March, with passage through to the end of May. Peak numbers occur in April and the first week of May. Smaller numbers pass through in the autumn, but the passage is more protracted from mid-August to the end of October. Odd singles occasionally summer, and breeding has been suspected in recent years.

Ring Ouzel: Singles sometimes seen on passage.

Blackbird: A common resident, breeding in small numbers.

Fieldfare: A winter visitor in varying numbers to the ranges and bushy parts of the tip. Numbers can exceed 200, with the birds present from October to April.

Song Thrush: Three or four pairs breed, widespread outside the breeding season.

Redwing: Up to three hundred occur from October to the end of March.

Mistle Thrush: Small numbers on the ranges during autumn passage.

Grasshopper Warbler: Occasional singing males in recent years.

Sedge Warbler: At least 12 pairs breed, scattered over the whole marsh.

Reed Warbler: The most frequent of the warblers with over 35 singing males. Small colonies line most of the fleet areas, while some pairs are established in nearly-dry sea aster on the lagoons. Passage birds augment the numbers in late summer, but few linger into October.

Dartford Warbler: One present from Nov. 26th 1972 until Feb. 18th 1973.

Lesser Whitethroat: Occasional singing birds along Mar Dyke.

Whitethroat: Up to ten singing males some years, scattered in rough vegetation over the whole marsh.

Blackcap: One or two pairs breed at the station and along Mar Dyke.

Chiffchaff: Singing passage birds are heard most years, while odd birds winter.

Willow Warbler: Occurs on passage anywhere on the marsh; a few pairs breed along Mar Dyke.

Goldcrest: A scarce passage migrant in October.

Bearded Tit: Normally a winter visitor from October to early March, but numbers do vary from year to year, and have declined since the severe winter of 1978/79. Large flocks are sometimes seen in the small areas of reed, and also in the sea aster, and have included counts of 35 on Dec. 9th

1972, 50 in February and 40 in November 1973, 50+ in January/February 1974, 45 on Feb. 27th 1975 and 40 in October 1978.

Long-tailed Tit: A few are sometimes seen in the wooded area along Mar Dyke.

Blue Tit: Widespread during October/November, when passage birds augment the small breeding population.

Great Tit: A few pairs breed, mainly near human habitation.

Jay: Single birds have been seen on the ranges, usually in October.

Magpie: At least two pairs have bred since the mid-1970s.

Jackdaw: Small numbers are regular scavengers on the rubbish tip.

Rook: As with the above, small numbers found during the year on the tip.

Carrion Crow: The most numerous crow, with up to 300 on the rubbish tip. A few pairs breed on the edge of the marsh. Can be quite a hazard to breeding waders etc. during spring and summer. Occasional Hooded Crows are present from November to April, but far less frequently now than in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Starling: Several thousand inhabit the rubbish tip during the winter, and even during mid-summer, a few hundred are regular. Breeds in small numbers.

House Sparrow: Present all year, with flocks of a few hundred feeding in the sea aster, and scavenging on the tip. Breeds around the farm.

Tree Sparrow: Small flocks occur on the lagoons during October and March.

Chaffinch: Although present all year, with a few pairs breeding, it is only common during autumn and winter. Numbers tend to vary, but usually build up during late autumn to a peak in the new year of about 300

Brambling: An irregular winter visitor to the lagoons and along the Thames shore; very few present in some winters (e.g. 1980/81) common in others. Recent three figure flocks have included: 200 on Feb. 21st and 350 on Mar. 14th 1976, 150 on Feb. 16th 1978, and up to 350 on Feb. 16th 1979.

Greenfinch: A few breed, otherwise a passage migrant and winter visitor with up to 500 birds some years.

Goldfinch: Present during the summer, and probably breeds. A build up begins in late August, and reaches a peak in September and October, with 580 present on Sept. 27th 1973 for example. Wintering numbers have also increased, but do not usually exceed 150.

Siskin: Occurs in small numbers on passage with other finches.

Linnet: A common breeding bird, widespread and frequent on passage and during the winter. Counts made during the last winter illustrate this; 100 in August and September, 250 in October, 200 in November, 250+ in December 1980, 250 in January, 200 in February and 270+ in March 1981.

Twite: A few winter from October to early April; usually numbers are below 30 but larger counts have been made on occasions, and have included 50 in February 1972, 50 in November 1974, record counts of 100 on Jan. 12th, 200 on Feb. 27th, 60 on Apr. 11th 1975, 40 on Mar. 14th, 35 on Nov. 27th 1976, 65 on Feb. 11th 1978, 40 on Feb. 25th and Mar. 3rd 1979, and 35 on Dec. 27th 1980. Most have been seen with other finches feeding on the sea aster along the Thames or on the lagoons.

Redpoll: A few breed at Purfleet, and small parties are sometimes seen flying over the marsh.

Bullfinch: Sometimes seen on the marsh, may breed along Mar Dyke.

Snow Bunting: An occasional winter visitor. Singles on Jan. 16th 1972, Mar. 22nd 1975, female on Nov. 13th 1976, males on Mar. 2nd 1977 and Dec. 20th 1980. The last individual stayed at least until March 1981.

Yellowhammer: A few pairs breed, otherwise a passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers.

Reed Bunting: A common breeding bird probably in excess of 40 pairs. Widespread during autumn and winter with up to 120 birds seen.

Corn Bunting: A small breeding population of between four and six pairs has become established in recent years, mainly on the rough pastureland of the firing ranges. Birds use the lagoons as a regular winter roost and counts of 100+ on Dec. 9th 1973 and 50+ on Mar. 18th and in January 1980 have been made.

THE FUTURE

Although pumping operations on the new lagoons will continue to prolong the active life of Rainham Marsh from a birdwatching point of view, the area is under continual pressure from other quarters. A possible by-pass is projected to cross the northern half of the area, bringing with it further industrial development along the railway and on the old firing ranges along Ferry Lane. The older lagoons (marked A and B on Noble's map) are fast disappearing under rubbish as 'land reclamation' gets under way. This coupled with irresponsible shooting by the local 'cowboys' and the ever present threat of egg collectors continues to be a problem.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To John Fitzpatrick, who gave me the initial encouragement to write this paper, and provided much information. To Jim White, Jeremy Hurley, Phil Vines, Tony Gray, and Don Burchfield, who have added much from their own published and unpublished notes and Ken Osborne who expertly drew the map. Finally to all the unsung heroes, the gallant band of Rainham regulars, who have helped by contributing their records to the London Bird Report. Long may they continue to do so!

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Note for Contributors

The Editor welcomes papers, short notes and photographs relating to the ornithology of the London Area, and will be pleased to advise authors on the acceptability of material at draft stage if desired.

Manuscripts All texts must be typewritten, double-spaced on A4 paper, using one side of the sheet only. A wide left-hand margin is essential. Lines should be full-out, except for new paragraphs and turned lines in lists. Underlining should be restricted to words to be set in italics. Tables and captions must be typed on separate sheets.

Style English names of birds and animals require initial capitals except after a hyphen, but group names and flowers do not. Scientific names should be underlined for italics, but only the first (generic) name needs an initial capital. Their use in the text is optional if listed in *The 'British Birds' List of Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Dates should take the form Apr. 28th, 1976; numbers under eleven should be spelt out in text; fractions should be decimalized; and, whenever possible, metric equivalents should be given in brackets after English measurements. Optional spellings should adopt the forms recommended by Fowler and/or the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Abbreviations should be standard. Full points should be omitted from well-known initials, such as BTO, LNHS and RSPB, but retained in 'e.g.', 'i.e.' and 'et al.'. Quotation marks, if used, should be single not double. Publications should not be in quotes, but underlined for italics. Parenthesis within brackets should be avoided. References need to adopt the following style:

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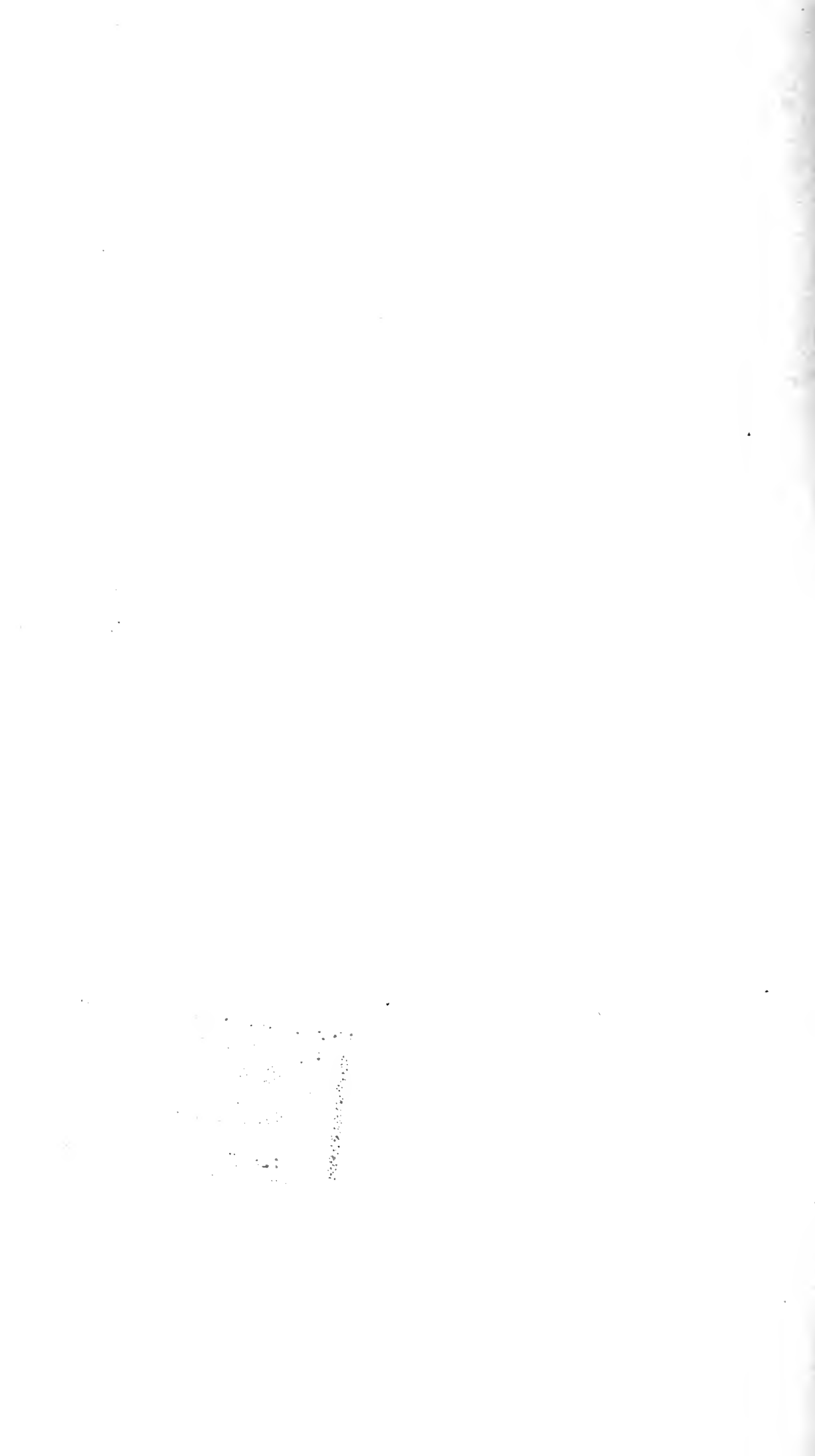
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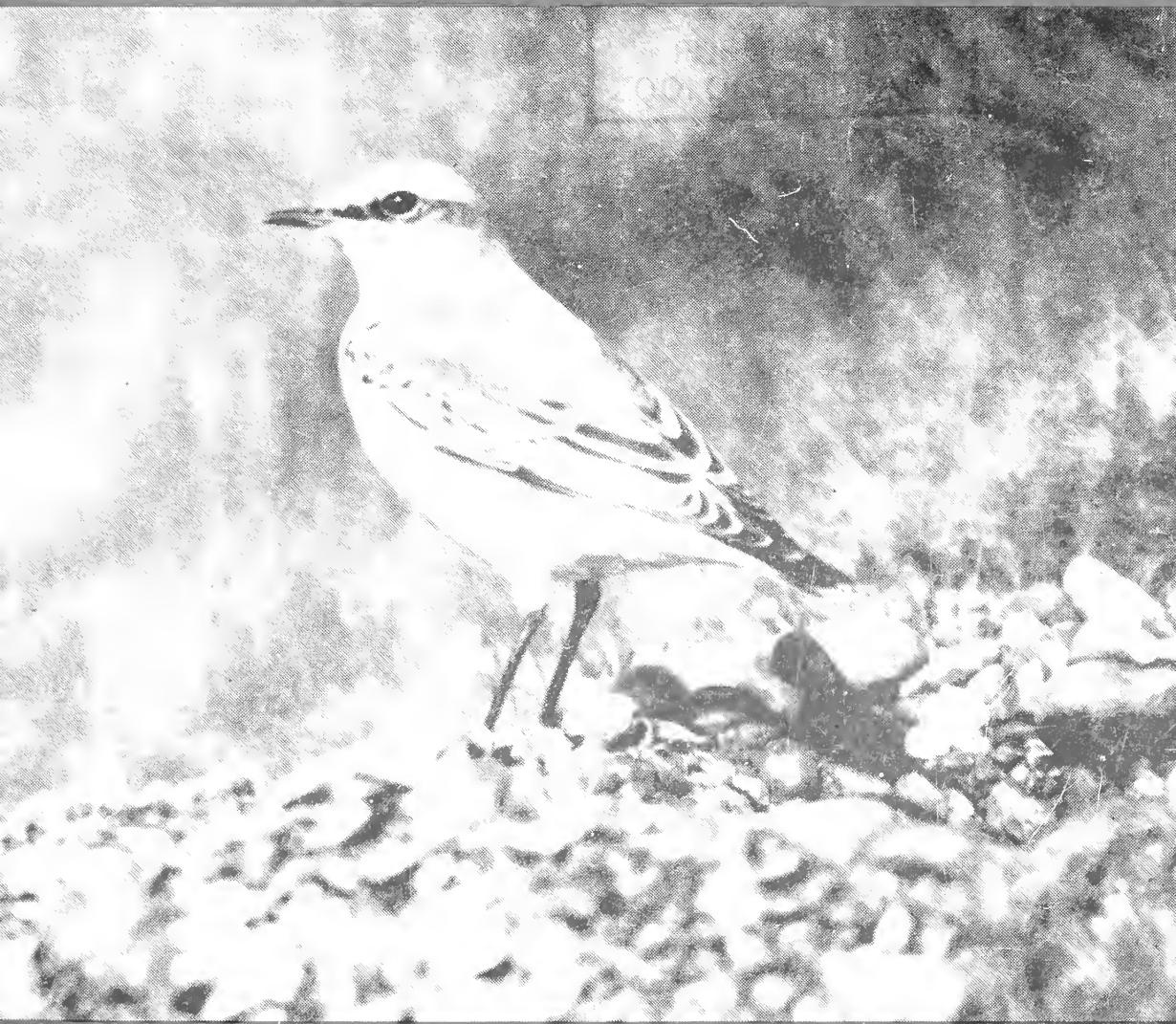
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LONDON BIRD REPORT



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Photograph

Front Cover Wheatear, Orpington, Kent August 1982 (*R. J. Chandler*)

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London Bird Report 1982

Editor: P. CLEMENT, 43 Largewood Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey.

Assisted by an editorial team of D. A. BOYD, M. K. DENNIS, J. FITZPATRICK, J. G. FRANCIS, R. B. HASTINGS, J. D. HOOK, F. H. JONES, A. V. MOON, P. NAYLOR and P. J. OLIVER.

Introduction

For the first time in recent years it is a remarkable pleasure to note that the recorders and members of the committee have remained the same. Hopefully this will develop into something of a permanent nature after all the changes that have taken place in the last few years. The only significant changes to be noted this year are, a different editorial address and the introduction into the report of a few pen and ink drawings which it is hoped will encourage other potential artists or illustrators to forward to the Editor similar drawings for incorporating into future reports.

Welcome news too was the high return of records, not an exceptional crop but nevertheless a good return compared with the dearth of records commented on in the last two year's reports. However, it is becoming clear that all is not well with the state of some of our breeding species, the records received, whilst not attempting to portray a total summary of the birds in our Area, indicate that a fair proportion are still decreasing. In the years since the *Atlas of Breeding Birds in the London Area* was produced it is quite alarming to see the rate of decline in some of our cherished species. Increasingly we are witnessing the withdrawal of Nightjar, Nightingale, Redstart, Grasshopper and Wood Warblers to name a few and these are not far behind departed friends like Woodlark, Red-backed Shrike and Wryneck. There are many gaps in our knowledge of London's birds but an effort to establish a more accurate picture of these species in the breeding season by observers would be appreciated not only now but by the future writers who come to compile the next work on the birds of our Area.

The Research Committee has drawn up a list of species to be surveyed in the forthcoming years. For some species this will not be carried out in the immediate future, but it is as urgent to keep a constant watch over all vulnerable species yearly as they are indicators of the way in which human disturbance, habitat destruction and other pressures affect the countryside.

Whilst we read almost daily of instances where man's interest comes into conflict with nature in other parts of the country and beyond it is as well to know that we in London are not immune from such problems. The vigilance of certain members of both the LNHS and the London Wildlife Trust over the Gunnersbury Triangle in West London has shown that public opinion can be aroused in support of wildlife and wild places brought under pressure by the demands of big business and industrial concerns whose sole motive is money and a profitless hedge, field or wood a nuisance. It is clear that the general public does care about the environment and we must ensure that in all cases where the threat of habitat destruction arises the case for the conservation of the Area is established by being able to produce evidence of its value for wildlife. London has probably the greatest number of active birdwatchers in the country not all of whom for various reasons submit records to this or the county reports which is a sad reflection on the state of attitudes to birdwatching in this country. Once again it is necessary to appeal for all records from the London Area to maintain or improve our ability to report as accurately as possible the yearly changes in bird populations. In

particular the lack of records from central London is becoming acute with only a handful of regular watchers making substantial contributions. With the passing of the official observers in the Royal Parks several years ago it is especially noticeable that coverage in some is, at best infrequent, the records committee would be glad to hear from anyone wishing to be considered an unofficial observer who can regularly send in reports from one (or more) of the Royal Parks.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editor gratefully acknowledges the enthusiastic support of all observers who contributed records to this edition of the *London Bird Report*. He especially thanks the recorders and the writers who helped to compile the systematic list, and R. J. Chandler who contributed the photograph and special thanks are due to Ken Osborne who laboured long and hard to produce such fine maps and diagrams.

He also acknowledges the many courtesies extended to members by the Greater London Council, the Thames Water Authority and the Port of London Authority. Thanks are also due to the following organisations for their generous help in the exchange of records:

British Birds Rarities Committee
 Essex Birdwatching and Preservation Society
 Hertfordshire Natural History Society
 Kent Ornithological Society
 Lee Valley Project Group
 Middle Thames Natural History Society
 Surrey Bird Club

Records Committee

P. J. OLIVER, *Chairman*

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*including records on the Lower Thames from London Bridge to Tilbury

†including records on the River Thames from Staines to Wandsworth

Review of the Year

The first week of January was relatively mild and was only notable for some **Red-necked Grebes** in the Lea Valley, two **Slavonian Grebes** – at Walthamstow Res. and Wraysbury G.P. – and an influx of **Oystercatchers** on the 2nd; although one **Great Northern** and two **Black-throated Divers** remained from 1981, as did a **Great Grey Shrike**. However winter returned, in the shape of snow and bitter temperatures (-15°C or below at night), on the 8th, and the snow fell almost continually for two days, and these conditions provided some exciting weekend birdwatching on the 9th and 10th. The highlight was a flock of 25 **Eider** (which appeared during a blizzard) in addition to the following species at two sites each – **Slavonian Grebe**, **Velvet Scoter**, **Red-breasted Merganser**, **Waxwing** and **Snow Bunting** as well as singles of **Bittern**, **Red Kite**, **Dipper** and **Glaucous Gull**, and lastly a flock of six **Scaup**.

During the next week a further three **Waxwings** and two **Snow Buntings** were found, however, by the following weekend (16th and 17th) a thaw had set in, but London's largest flock of **Goosander** since the Arctic winter of 1962/63 gathered at Queen Mary Res., and **Smew** reached their winter peak of 13 at Wraysbury G.P. on the 19th. During the cold spell the new, and deep-waters of Queen Mother and Wraysbury reservoirs were again the big favourites and between them were able to boast four divers (of two species), five species of grebe, **Velvet Scoter**, **Red-breasted Merganser**, **Ferruginous Duck** as well as 24 **Ruddy Duck** and five **Smew**. The pace slackened considerably towards the end, but during the month as a whole the cold weather was responsible for an influx of at least 50 **Ruddy Duck**, up to four **Hen Harriers** at Rainham, a high total of 24 sightings of **Woodcock** and **Bittern**, (a species always severely affected by icy weather), which appeared at seven sites.

February's weather was dull and mild and even a spell of easterlies in mid-month failed to cause temperatures to drop (mainly due to extensive cloud cover). Bird watching, like the weather, was quiet and involved only several, presumably recirculating **Red-necked Grebes** on the 6th, 13th and 20th; and three **Red-throated Divers** on the 15th, 20th and 21st, a **Mediterranean Gull** in Regent's Park (which stayed into March) and a good-sized herd of **Bewick's Swans** (18) at Staines Res. on the 24th.

March was generally unsettled up to the 20th when the wind turned to the SE and began a long dry spring spell that lasted into May. **Red-necked Grebes** appeared at new localities, a **Red-throated Diver** arrived somewhat mysteriously at Richmond Park, two more **Waxwings** were located, this time at Harlow, on the 13th and by the 17th the first **Wheatears** of the year had set foot in London rapidly followed by a **Garganey** at Sevenoaks G.P. the next day. By the end of the month **Scaup** had been seen at three localities, more **Garganey** (a pair) at Broxbourne G.P. on the 27th and a very early **Osprey** – Speyside bound – passed briefly over the Brent Res. on the 28th.

April was extremely dry, winds were mainly light and variable in the first week, N to NW in the second and the N to NE until the month's end; **Garganey** continued a good spring for this species in London with pairs at Sevenoaks, Stocker's Lake and Ponders End in the first four days, and the total at the latter locality had risen to nine by the 9th. Early April saw the returning surge of summer visitors including **Turtle Dove**, **Cuckoo** and **Ring Ouzel** although the best by far was a **Hoopoe** at Hounslow on the 6th; six **Avocets** paid a brief visit to Hilfield Park Res. on the 2nd and the same number of **Brent Geese** were at Rainham on the 9th. The first rarity of the year — a **Purple Heron** — was seen all too fleetingly at Beddington S.F. on the 11th; birds of prey were represented by a **Buzzard** at Rye Meads S.F. on the 14th and a **Marsh Harrier** at Woodmansterne on the 19th. **Ring Ouzels**

appeared at three sites in the mid-month and there were two further sightings of **Garganey**; **Bar-tailed Godwits** were at two places towards the end of the month and **Black-tailed Godwit** at one. **Arctic Terns** achieved a new peak of 140 at Staines Res. on the 29th.

Just as April had been dry May, conversely, was very wet especially early in the month when it was quite cool with mainly westerly winds, however it was warmer from the 8th to the 18th (SE/E winds), becoming cooler again before ending in sultry heat. May Day was celebrated with a fine **Red-throated Pipit** at Rainham and a **Golden Oriole** at Northaw Great Wood and on the 2nd an **Osprey** passed over Rye Meads S.F.; on the wader front **Sanderling** were seen at several localities in the southwest on the 2nd and 3rd, and **Bar-tailed Godwits** were seen on two dates, although it was a poor spring for the latter species. The warm SE weather that began on the 8th had instant results with a **Marsh Harrier** at Sewardstone and a **Wryneck** (uncommon in spring) at Stanstead Abbots G.P.; an **Osprey** flew over Stocker's Lake on the 10th and a **Temminck's Stint** was located at Netherhall G.P. on the 11th, the same day an unseasonal **Shag** was on the River Thames at Dartford, another **Osprey** and a **Golden Oriole** were noted on the 13th. The following day a **Red-backed Shrike** put in an appearance at Headley but more unusually an **Arctic Skua** was seen at Rainham. The latter site again came up trumps the next day when several observers were indeed fortunate to see a **Crane** fly over – undoubtedly sharing the chief spring billing with the **Red-throated Pipit**. Sadly, a **Bluethroat** was found dying at Tadworth on the 20th, however, a **Hoopoe** at Potters Bar on the same day was in better health; the fifth and final **Osprey** of the spring paid a visit to Caterham on the 24th and a **Serin** was seen at Stanstead Abbots G.P. on the 26th (the third rarity of the month).

Statistically June will be remembered for being the wettest for over 100 years, violent thunderstorms were at their height during the first few days (nearly four inches of rain fell at Cheshunt in two storms on the 4th and 5th) but persisted less severely throughout the month. The only migrant of note was a **Golden Oriole** at Harlow on the 20th.

Breeding success was generally poor; on the debit side **Cetti's Warbler** plummeted (a dramatic turnaround from 11 singing males in 1981). **Grasshopper Warblers** continued to decline and **Stonechats** had a bad year; **Kestrels** apparently increased but whereas **Sparrowhawk** sightings increased the number of breeding pairs did the reverse. The totals at the Walthamstow heronry fell slightly, whilst the colony at Harefield Moor continued to expand; five pairs of **Shelduck** bred and also one pair of **Shoveler** and of interest, but probably of no lasting significance, both **Red-necked Grebe** and **Goosander** summered.

July was an uneventful month, amongst the rather sparse selection of returning waders came the odd **Spotted Redshank** and **Black-tailed Godwit** with the more usual **Greenshank**, **Ruff**, **Green** and **Common Sandpipers**. Observers at Beddington S.F. had the best bird of the month when a **Stone-Curlew** was discovered on July 21st. A male **Brambling** at Uxbridge on the incredible date of July 12th was perhaps not a wild bird.

Migration watchers found more to satisfy them in August. Warm weather (27°C) at the beginning of the month, with north-easterly winds, changed to westerlies or south-westerlies for the rest of the month. It was an excellent month for terns. Two rarities occurred, the inevitable **White-winged Black** at West Thurrock on Aug. 7th – now becoming a regular visitor to this site – and a lone **Caspian Tern**, beating its way into the sunset at Staines Res. on the evening of Aug. 11th. The largest autumn passage of **Common Terns** for many years was a feature of both August and September. The first of two major movements took place on Aug. 15th, when at least 160 passed through

Barn Elms, with many elsewhere. **Black Terns** were more scarce, but had reached 40 at West Thurrock by 14th. Wader passage, whilst not exceptional, did produce 100 **Common Sandpipers** at Rainham on the 5th, and good numbers of **Wood Sandpipers** in the first week, including seven together at Kempton Res. An adult **Pectoral Sandpiper** was found at Perry Oaks on Aug. 16th, but only stayed the one day; another at the end of the month remained into September. During the month, a small influx of **Shags** was noted in the Lea Valley, and a **Gannet** was picked up in Inner London. The only raptor of note was a **Marsh Harrier** at Rainham on 28th.

September was a month of mixed fortunes. Westerly winds continued to predominate, and a long warm, dry spell between the 10th and 20th (27°C on 18th) did little to raise the ornithological temperature. Winds became fresh to strong during the last week. Passerine migration was generally poor, with only six autumn **Pied Flycatchers**, but 30 **Wheatears** at Old Slade was a good count. **Common Terns** were again the most obvious migrants on the reservoirs, and the second big movement took place on Sept. 5th, this time Barn Elms reporting 184 moving through, a very high count, and also 72 at Staines. **Arctic Skuas** are regular but rare, overland migrants, and three sightings during this month was not surprising. The same cannot be said for **Great Skua**, judging from past records, so three records during September was very much of a bonus. Yet another **Gannet** appeared, this time flying over Hendon on Sept. 25th. Wader passage continued throughout the month, and amongst the generally small numbers of **Little Stints** and **Curlew Sandpipers**, two more **Pectoral Sandpipers** were found, a long stayer at Rainham from Sept. 15th to 28th, and another on the newly drained north basin at Staines on 30th. A **Temminck's Stint** at Rainham joined the Pectoral Sandpiper on 25th, and another was present over the next three days. Birds of prey included a **Buzzard** at Watford, and an **Osprey** at Barn Elms, both on Sept. 9th, and a **Peregrine** at Rainham on 12th. **Hobbies** were quite widespread, with frequent appearances in the Staines area at the beginning of the month. **Spotted Crakes**, on typical dates, were at Amwell G.P. from Sept. 12th to Oct. 2nd, and by Waterloo Bridge on 29th. Good numbers of **Sandwich Terns** appeared in the second half of the month, including 20 at Sevenoaks on Sept. 18th.

October was a very wet month, with twice the average rainfall recorded. On only three days were easterlies recorded, on 12th, 16th and 29th. Drainage of the north basin of Staines Res. during the autumn was complete by late September, creating ideal conditions for ducks and waders for the rest of the year, and as in the 1970s, much attention was focussed on this site. Yet another **Pectoral Sandpiper** (the fifth and last of the autumn) was watched here between Oct. 6th and 14th, soon to be followed by one of the highlights of the year, a **Baird's Sandpiper**, which was identified on 14th. A good record in its own right, the bird stayed on the reservoir for the rest of the 1982/83 winter, becoming a constant attraction for Staines visitors during the next six months. Elsewhere, two **Leach's Petrels** – always an exciting bird to see inland – were found at Stanstead Abbots on Oct. 3rd and at Queen Mary on 24th. A **Wryneck** was at Chislehurst on 3rd, and **Ring Ouzels** appeared at Beddington on 9th, and at Wanstead on 11th. An **Osprey** at Harefield Moor on Oct. 10th was followed by other good birds of prey towards the end of the month, including **Hen Harrier** and **Merlin** at Rainham, and a **Peregrine** at Staines. Several flocks of **Bearded Tits** were reported. Another good influx of **Short-eared Owls** took place, with about 41 birds in October and almost as many in November.

November continued the wet weather and the month opened with one surprised observer finding an **Eider** on his garden pond in Streatham on Nov. 1st. The first week of November saw a large movement of **Brent Geese**

moving south down the east coast, and records of Brent and other flocks of 'small geese' flying over the London Area certainly reflect this, with parties at eight sites between 2nd and 7th. Staines Res. with excellent coverage, produced one good bird after another, there were 20 **Grey Plovers** on 5th, **Bittern**, **Scaup**, **Sand Martin**, and 24 **Brents** on 7th, an **Avocet** on 10th, a **Curlew Sandpiper**, 9 **Kittiwakes**, and a **Snow Bunting** on 13th, and a **Slavonian Grebe** on 20th. Three different **Mediterranean Gulls** were seen between Oct. 23rd and Nov. 7th. Towards the end of the month, several summer migrants were still lingering, with a **Wheatear** still at London Colney on 25th, a **Garganey** at Sevenoaks on 27th, and a **Swallow** at Rye Meads on 28th. Wintering **Firecrests** were commoner than usual in southern Britain, and again London reflected this trend with about 14 individuals in November and December.

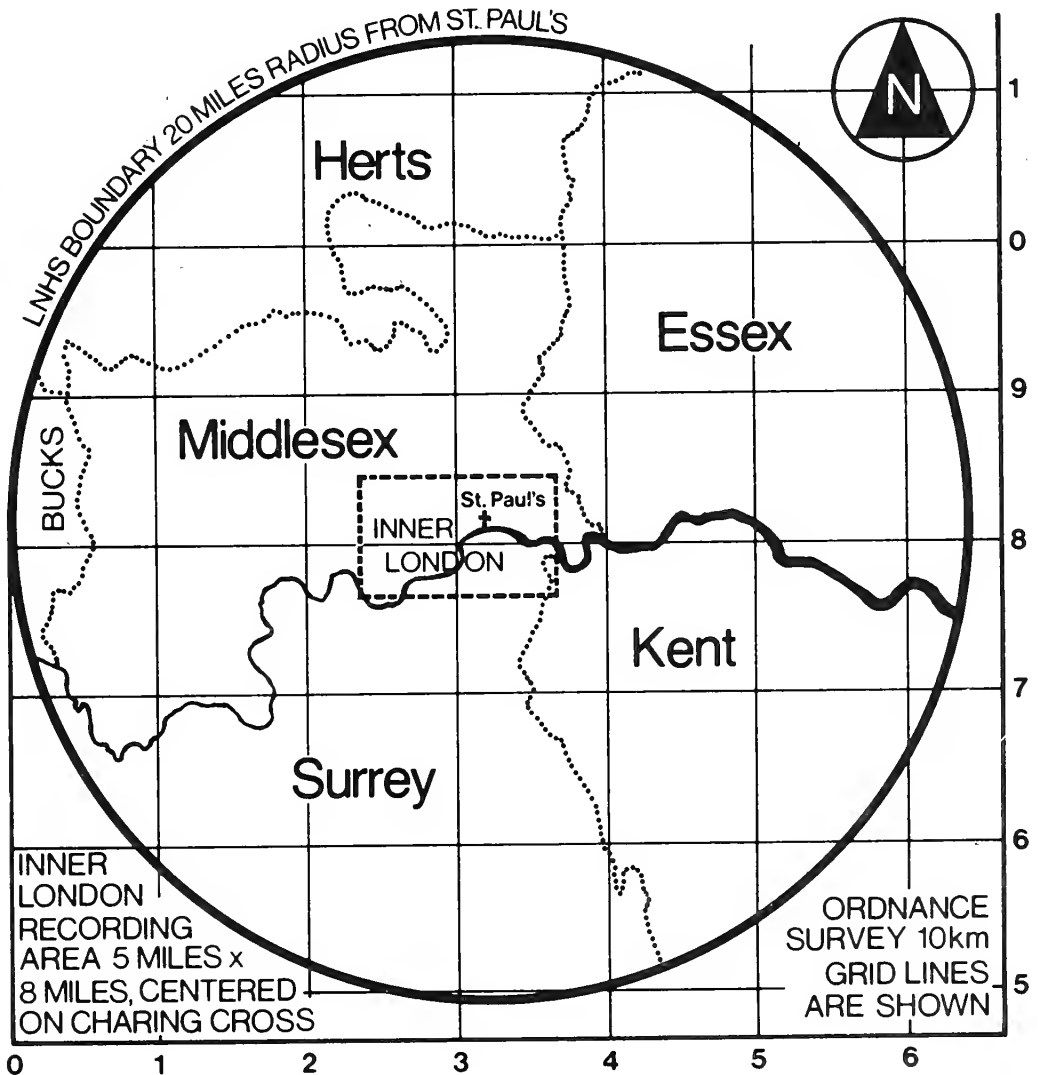
An unidentified Guillemot or Razorbill was at Woolwich on Dec. 1st, whilst a **House Martin** was seen at Theobalds Park on the same day. A definite **Guillemot** found its way to Chingford two days later. The rest of the month was fairly quiet, with several weekends washed out by heavy rain. Nine more **Brent Geese** landed on the Brent Res. (an appropriate site!) on Dec. 4th, and Cheshunt G.P. held a very high count of 155 **Gadwall** on Dec. 12th. **Merlins** were sighted at Rainham on 18th, and Harmondsworth on 20th. Cheshunt also had a **Great Grey Shrike** on 13th. A **Velvet Scoter** reached Stoke Newington Res. on Dec. 23rd, and a **Peregrine** flew over Uxbridge on Christmas Day, whilst two **Avocets** at Staines on Christmas Eve stayed long enough for one of them to see in the New Year.

Arrival and Departure Dates of Migrants

<i>Summer Migrants</i>	<i>Arrival</i>			<i>Departure</i>		
Hobby	Apr. 21	Barn Elms Res.	RBH	Sept. 28	N. Stifford	PJS
Little Ringed Plover	Mar. 14	Amwell G.P.	GJW	Oct. 4	Rainham Marsh	MKD
Black Tern	Apr. 23	Staines Res.	JAS	Nov. 5	Staines Res.	JAS
		Old Slade N.R.	BBC			
Turtle Dove	Apr. 5	Regent's Park	TD	Oct. 15	Regent's Park	TD
Cuckoo	Apr. 4	Sevenoaks G.P.	AHH	Sept. 18	Walthamstow Res.	TG
Nightjar	May 25	Ongar	EBWPS	—	—	—
Swift	Apr. 24	three localities		Oct. 3	Staines Res.	BC
					Bexley	DRG
Sand Martin	Mar. 13	Cheshunt G.P.	HNHS	Nov. 7	Staines Res.	JHr.BAR
Swallow	Apr. 4	Waltham Abbey	JF	Nov. 28	Rye Meads S.F.	HNHS
House Martin	Mar. 29	Maple Cross S.F.	MCRG	Dec. 1	Theobalds Park	BT
Tree Pipit	Mar. 21	Sevenoaks G.P.	AHH	Oct. 9	Rainham Marsh	MKD
Yellow Wagtail	Apr. 4	five localities		Nov. 14	Stanstead Abbots G.P. CC/	
Nightingale	Apr. 24	Hoblingwell Wood	KHP		No autumn records	
Redstart	Apr. 15	Beddington S.F.	GDJM	Oct. 5	Regent's Park	JPW
Whinchat	Apr. 20	Alexandra Park	NB	Nov. 2	Brent Res.	LB.RW
Wheatear	Mar. 17	Wimbledon Common	EDM	Nov. 25	London Colney	HNHS
Grasshopper Warbler	Apr. 17	Epsom Common	TJA	Sept. 14	Epsom Common	ESB
Sedge Warbler	Apr. 4	Amwell G.P.	CC/	Oct. 9	Bedfont Quarry	RRG
Reed Warbler	Apr. 16	Croxley Hall G.P.	TRD	Oct. 17	Stanstead Abbots G.P. CC/	
					Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr. 15	Sevenoaks G.P.	AHH	Sept. 26	Alexandra Park	NB
Whitethroat	Apr. 17	Stanstead Abbots G.P.	CC/	Sept. 23	Wembley	LGF
Garden Warbler	Apr. 22	Walton Heath	CKD.POD	Oct. 30	Queen Mary G.P.	HRG
Wood Warbler	Apr. 28	Dagnam Park	DS	Aug. 12	Orpington	RD ₁
Willow Warbler	Mar. 27	Beddington S.F.	KDGM	Dec. 8	Sevenoaks G.P.	AHH
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr. 20	Kew Gardens	PJE	Oct. 5	Regent's Park	SBY
Pied Flycatcher	Apr. 8	Hilfield Park Res.	CIB	Sept. 13	Regent's Park	JPW
<i>Winter Migrants</i>	<i>Departure</i>			<i>Arrival</i>		
Fieldfare	May 8	Rainham Marsh	JMH	Sept. 16	Thamesmead	PJS
Redwing	Apr. 30	Kew Gardens	RBH	Sept. 21	Hilfield Park Res.	CIB
Brambling	May 1	Hilfield Park Res.	CIB	Oct. 17	Orpington	BB
Siskin	May 1	Barn Elms Res.	RBH	Oct. 9	Denham G.P.	JE
	June 6	Petts Wood	BB			

Recording Arrangements

The Society's recording area, which in this report is called the 'London Area', is bounded by a circle of 20 miles radius centred on St. Paul's Cathedral. Within the area, the original county boundaries are used for recording purposes, rather than the new administrative counties. In addition, there is a special recording zone for Inner London (a rectangle 5 miles \times 8 miles, centred on Charing Cross). All records of interest are welcome from members and non-members, and these should be sent to the appropriate Recorder (see list on page 4).



It will assist the speedy entering of records if the Society's recording sheets are used (available from Recorders on request), and if records are listed in the order followed in the *London Bird Report*. Separate sheets should be used for each recording area. Completed recording sheets should be submitted in August for the period January to July, and in early January for August to December.

Records of rare and unusual species in the London Area are examined by the Records Committee before inclusion in the *London Bird Report*. Published records need to stand the scrutiny of not only today's readers but

also anyone who in future years may refer to the systematic list. Brief field-notes are therefore required to provide supporting evidence of correct identification and authenticity for the following species:

All rare species

All out of season migrants

All divers	Little Gull away from regular haunts
Slavonian Grebe	All terns except Common and Black
Red-necked and Black-necked Grebes except at regular haunts	All auks
Petrels and shearwaters	Long-eared and Short-eared Owls
Gannet and Shag	Wryneck
All bitterns	Woodlark
Hérons other than Grey	Races of <i>Anthus spinoletta</i> other than Rock Pipit and Water Pipit at regular localities
Bewick's and Whooper Swans	White Wagtail in autumn
All geese except Canada	Races of hybrids of <i>Motacilla flava</i> other than Yellow Wagtail
Ferruginous Duck, Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Velvet Scoter and female Red-breasted Merganser	<i>M.f.flavissima</i>
All birds-of-prey excluding Kestrel and Sparrowhawk (except Inner London)	Waxwing
Quail	Ring Ouzel
Rails and crakes, except Water Rail, Moorhen and Coot	Unusual warblers
All waders of irregular occurrence	Firecrest
All skuas	Willow Tit away from regular haunts
All gulls of irregular occurrence including Iceland, Glaucous and Kittiwake	All shrikes
	Twite, Crossbill; Lapland, Snow and Cirl Buntings

Field-notes for each observation should be submitted to the recorder immediately following the observation, rather than waiting until the end of the year. Evidence needs to be brief but relevant, and should include a description of the essential features upon which identification was based, relative size, flight, calls, duration and distance of observation, and the observers' previous experience of this and similar species.

NATIONAL RARITIES

Records of national rarities (see list in *British Birds* 67 : 347-8) should be submitted preferably via the local recorder for forwarding to the national committee. If sent direct, a copy of the submission should be sent to the recorder. Observers are asked to submit records promptly to ensure acceptance and publication in the same year.

RARE BREEDING BIRDS

Breeding records of rare species (see list in *British Birds* 67 : 174) should be submitted preferably via the local recorder (stating degree of confidentiality required) for forwarding to the national Rare Breeding Birds Panel. All reports of these species (and others, less rare) are treated in complete confidence at county level. With the exception of Black Redstart, names of localities are never published and only the name of the county is given in the *London Bird Report*.

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Birds of the London Area, 1982

with Additions and Corrections for previous years

A REPORT OF THE BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

The classification of species in this report is that adopted by K. H. Voous in his *List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species* (reprinted 1977 from *Ibis* 115: 612-38 and *Ibis* 119 : 223-50, 376-406). Sequence and nomenclature follow the 'British Birds' *List of Birds of the Western Palearctic* (1978).

For recording purposes all species have been given numbers, with suffix letters for subspecies, but it should be noted that this numbering has no significance outside the London Area.

Observers' initials in the report are shown against principal records. A full list of observers appears on pages 11 and 12. The abbreviation 'mo' used for long-stay records indicates 'many observers'.

The six counties within the London Area are signified by initials in the report: E = Essex, H = Hertfordshire, M = Middlesex, B = Buckinghamshire, K = Kent and S = Surrey. Inner London records are normally under the respective counties (Middlesex and Surrey), but abbreviated as 'IL' in tables. For direction of flight, cardinal points are shortened to N, NE, NNE, etc. Other abbreviations are: Res. = reservoir, G. P. = gravel pit, N.R. = nature reserve, S. P. = sand pit, S.F. = sewage farm or works, and *Lond. Bird Rep.* or *LBR* = *London Bird Report*.

For a full appreciation of many of the records in this report, a detailed map of the London Area will be found useful. Reference should also be made to the Society's books *Birds of the London Area* (1957 and 1964) and *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the London Area* (1977), which gave the continuous history of species from 1900. A complete London Area Checklist (1901-77) appears in *London Bird Report* 43 : 71-84.

1 Red-throated Diver

- E Rainham, one on the River Thames on Jan. 10th (NI). Tilbury, one flew down-river on Feb. 20th (JMH).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., a slightly oiled individual on Feb. 21st (AHH).
- S Queen Elizabeth II Res., one found dead on Feb. 15th (WRI). Richmond Park, an oiled bird present from Mar. 7th to 14th had been placed there by the RSPCA, and its original provenance is unknown (GCG *et al.*).

Since 1970 there have been 35 records, all in the months of January to April and November. Two-thirds of these have occurred in February and March indicating a northward passage through the Area. Only three have occurred in November. Compared with these figures, five in one year is a good showing, equalling 1971 and exceeded only by the nine in 1977.

2 Black-throated Diver

- E King George V Res., one on Jan. 12th was possibly the same bird seen here in December 1981 (AJG).
- M Wraysbury Res., two on Jan. 16th and 17th and three (in company with a Great Northern) on Jan. 31st, and singles on Feb. 28th and

Mar. 27th. King George VI Res., one on Feb. 27th. Staines Res., one on Mar. 21st and Apr. 3rd which flew off S with the Great Northern Diver (mo).

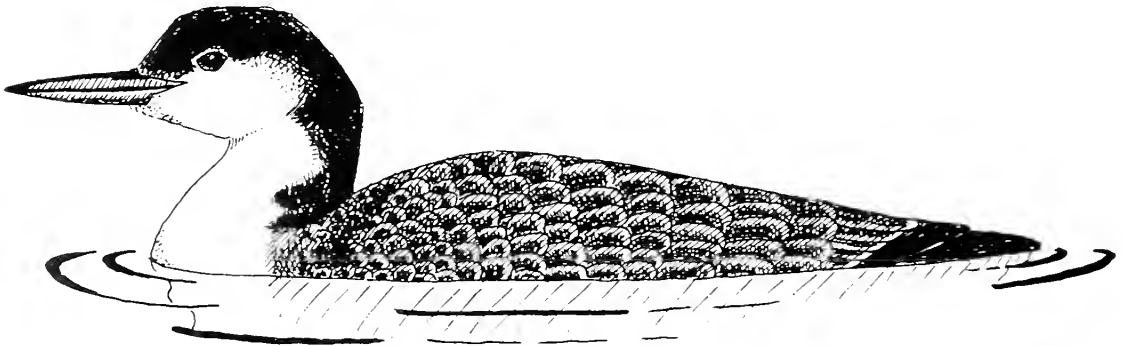
B Queen Mother Res., one bird present from Dec. 25th 1981 remained until Jan. 31st when it was joined by another then one seen on Feb. 21st, Feb. 28th and again on Mar. 28th. Wraysbury G. P., one on Jan. 26th, Feb. 1st and 7th (mo).

K Littlebrook G.P., one from Nov. 21st to 27th (wis *et al.*).

Only three birds in all were involved in the Middx. and Bucks. records at the beginning of the year and all, as the records show were highly mobile, the original bird from December 1981 being joined by the other two from Jan. 16th and no more than one was seen after Jan. 31st.

In the years since 1970 there have been 32 records, with most occurring in December but the overall pattern is far more evenly spread across the winter months than that of Red-throated Diver.

3 Great Northern Diver



G.M. HAIG.

M/B Queen Mother Res., the bird present from Dec. 25th 1981 remained until Jan. 24th and from then until it departed to the south on Apr. 3rd (in company with the last Black-throated) it paid intermittent visits to King George VI Res. (1), Staines Res. (4), and Wraysbury Res. (6). Another at the Queen Mother Res. from Nov. 26th to Dec. 5th (mo).

Not surprisingly this remains the rarest of the divers in the Area with only 14 records since 1970. The tendency to linger on the deeper waters is well demonstrated by the bird that stayed for over three months at the Queen Mother Res.

6 Little Grebe

For most areas, fewer breeding records were received than in 1981, the exception being Essex, where the total of 17 broods represents an apparent three-fold increase. Winter flocks were also slightly reduced in size. Breeding records, large counts and Inner London records are given. Numbers in brackets are the numbers of broods or breeding pairs.

E Bred at Berwick Ponds (3), Fishers Green (2), Ilford (1), Netherhall (4), Ockenden (1), Rainham (3) and Thurrock (3).

H Bred at Amwell G.P. (6), Cassiobury Park (2), Cheshunt G.P. (7), Colney Heath G.P. (1), Hilfield Park Res. (9) and Stocker's Lake (1). Hilfield Park Res., 42 on Nov. 9th (CIB).

- M Bred at Brent Res. (2), Denham (1), Harefield (2), Kempton East Res. (1), Springwell (1), Stanwell Place G.P. (1) and Stoneyfield Park, Edgware (1). Inner London: Hyde Park, one on Nov. 30th (DAB). Regent's Park, singles from Mar. 18th to 23rd, on May 16th and from Oct. 6th to Nov. 15th (SBY, TD, JPW).
- B The only breeding record was of one pair at Old Slade N.R. (BBC).
- K Bred at Beckenham (1) and Crossway Lake, Thamesmead (1). Dartford, 40 on Sept. 12th (DRG). Ruxley G.P., 22 in January (SJG).
- S Bred at Bookham Common (1), Epsom Common (1+), Holmethorpe S.P. (1) and Londsedale Road Res. (1). Kew, 14 on the River Thames on Feb. 25th (RBH). Inner London: Surrey Docks, one on Mar. 7th (DAM).

7 Great Crested Grebe

Breeding pairs were reported as follows:

	Essex	Herts	Middx.	Inner London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	Total
1981	50	21	35	4	1+	3+	10	124
1982	52	55	43	13	3	7	20	193

In most areas the coverage appeared to be better in 1982 than in the previous year, so the increase (to a little above the 1980 levels) may be more apparent than real. Concentrations of more than ten breeding pairs, Inner London breeding records and counts of more than 100, or sector maxima where less, are given. The total for the wildfowl counts in September was 605, compared with 477 for 1981 (the latter figure has been adjusted from that published in the previous *L.B.R.* for further counts received). Coverage in the two years was comparable. While the 1982 count is high by the standard of most recent years it is still well below the total of over 800 counted in 1980. Mid-winter counts were consistently around 400, somewhat similar to recent years if cold weather influxes are ignored.

- E Nazeing G.P., 15 broods. Walthamstow Res., 11 broods. King George V Res., 125 in September.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 15 pairs bred. Hilfield Park Res., 82 in November.
- M Brent Res., 15 nests. King George VI Res., 123 in January. Queen Mary Res., 190 on Aug. 21st increased rapidly to 306 by Sept. 5th, declining slowly thereafter; presumably these were moulting birds. Staines Res., 116 in December. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, six pairs nested, five of them successfully. Regent's Park, six pairs nested; a total of 36 young was raised at these two localities.
- B Queen Mother Res., 100+ in January.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 38 in March.
- S Queen Elizabeth II Res., 153 in January. Inner London: Surrey Docks, one pair attempted to nest but was unsuccessful.

8 Red-necked Grebe

- E King George V Res., one from Jan. 1st to 3rd, one from Mar. 7th to Apr. 10th and one from Oct. 24th to Nov. 27th (CFN, JF, PJV *et al.*). Wm. Girling Res., three on Jan. 1st and 3rd and two on 10th (AJG, JF), and one from Apr. 18th until Nov. 27th was joined by a second from Nov. 13th (JF). Fishers Green, one from Feb. 20th to Mar. 13th (GJW *et al.*). Nazeing G.P., one on Jan. 16th (RL). Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 14th (RF).

- H Cheshunt G.P., one from Jan. 10th to 13th was considered by the observers to have been the bird seen earlier at King George V Res. (JF,GJW). Hilfield Park Res., singles on Mar. 5th and 29th (CIB).
- M Queen Mary Res., one from Feb. 6th to 13th (HRG).
- B Queen Mother Res., two from Jan. 10th to Mar. 28th (JE,LGF,AVM,PN) and one on Dec. 28th (GMH,JHT). Wraysbury G.P., one from Feb. 13th to 21st (LGF,GMH,AVM,PN).
- S Queen Elizabeth II Res., one on Jan. 17th (DGN,CO).

Excluding the exceptional numbers recorded in 1979 this was the best year since 1970 with over 18 individuals involved and includes the fifth summering record this century, the first for 13 years.

9 Slavonian Grebe

- E Walthamstow Res., one from Jan. 1st to 4th (JF,PF) and one from Oct. 17th to Nov. 9th (GBS,JF,PJH *et al.*). Wm. Girling Res., three on Jan. 10th, during a cold spell (PJV *et al.*). Harlow, one from Oct. 30th to Nov. 11th (EBWPS) may have been the bird seen later at King George V Res. from Nov. 13th, and was joined by another from the 14th both staying to the 27th (JF).
- M Queen Mary Res., one from Sept. 20th to 22nd (HRG). Staines Res., singles on Feb. 14th (AVM,PN), Sept. 27th (APGd) and Nov. 20th (GMH,JHT,BAR). Inner London: Hyde Park, one on the Serpentine during very cold weather on Jan. 10th (DAB).
- B Queen Mother Res., one from Jan. 14th to 17th (JE,GMH), and one from Nov. 4th to Dec. 29th, with a second on Dec. 28th (mo). Wraysbury G.P., one on Jan. 1st (THJ), one on Nov. 17th (GAR), and one from Dec. 11th to 30th, is thought to have been different from either of the birds seen at Queen Mother Res. (TJL,AVM,PN).
- K Littlebrook G.P., one on Mar. 14th (DRG). Dartford, singles on Mar. 21st (RHT), and Apr. 19th and 20th (CEG,DFY).

Following the pattern of Red-necked Grebe, 1982 was a good year for this species, both had the best numbers in the last ten years, again this excludes 1979 which was exceptional for the influx of high numbers of both species into the London Area.

10 Black-necked Grebe

- E Wm. Girling Res., five on Jan. 10th (PJV), and up to four on various dates to Apr. 4th (JF), then up to six between Oct. 3rd and the end of the year (JF,PJV). King George V Res., one from July 31st to Nov. 27th, with a second on Aug. 7th and 8th (JF,PJV). Walthamstow Res., one from Oct. 9th until Dec. 18th, and a second from Nov. 1st to 9th (CA,JF *et al.*).
- H Cheshunt G.P., two on Apr. 7th (MJO). Hilfield Park Res., four on Aug. 10th (CIB).
- M Staines Res., a single bird present at the beginning of the year remained alone until the first week of March, after which numbers increased to a maximum of 10 on Apr. 2nd, then decreased until one remained from Apr. 29th to May 18th. Autumn passage began with the arrival of a family party of four on June 27th, and the autumn maximum of 33 (compared with the record number of 39 in 1981) was reached between Aug. 24th and 28th, and the last six were seen on Oct. 21st. King George VI Res., singles on Jan. 16th and 17th and Sept. 12th, and 12 on Oct. 17th (CJH,JAH,PN). Wraysbury Res., one on Jan. 17th (AVM). Queen Mary Res., one on Jan. 21st (JHT).

Harefield Moor G.P., one on Sept. 4th (AVM). Ponders End G.P., one on Apr. 9th (GBS). Stoke Newington Res., one on Nov. 20th (TG).

K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Oct. 8th (AHH).

S Barn Elms Res., one on Aug. 14th (WR) and two on Oct. 5th (DGHM). Island Barn Res., two on Jan. 2nd (DSD) and three on Feb. 22nd (WRI). Walton Res., one on Sept. 12th (DGN,CO).

The second highest total of birds, 33 was reached this year in August a little earlier than has become usual. From early August onwards the northern basin of Staines Reservoir was gradually emptied and surprisingly for a species that prefers shallow and sheltered feeding areas the birds also began to disperse until the last were seen on Oct. 21st when the reservoir was almost completely empty and held only a small area of shallow water. It is interesting to note that the birds moved completely out of the Area highlighting the particular attraction of this reservoir.

18 Manx Shearwater 1981 Correction

B Old Slade N.R., the July 1st sighting was in 1970 and not 1969 as published in the *L.B.R.* No. 46 for 1981.

23 Leach's Petrel

H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Oct. 3rd (AHS *per* HNHS).

M Queen Mary Res., one on Oct. 24th (HM,LR,KRE *et al.*).

The total for the London Area now stands at 41 since 1900.

25 Gannet

M Hendon, a first or second-year bird flew SW on Sept. 25th (JBG). Inner London: Hans Crescent, SW1., an adult picked up exhausted during August was later released at Pagham Harbour, Sussex (*per* JP).

These two take the total to 38 records for the Area this century. The Inner London record occurred at a time of strong north-westerly winds.

26 Cormorant

E Fishers Green, present from January to May and from October to December, with maxima of 112 on Jan. 24th and 97 on Dec. 30th (GJW). Walthamstow Res., present in all months, with maxima of 180 on Feb. 21st and an unprecedented 210 on Oct. 20th (CA,JF); one found dead on Feb. 18th had been ringed at Tenby, Dyfed, on June 29th, 1980 (GJW).

H Colne and Lea Valleys, parties of up to 30 reported from several localities up to late May and from mid-September onwards, the maximum count being 33 at Cheshunt G.P. on Mar. 14th (HNHS).

M Harefield Moor G.P., maxima at roost 80 on Feb. 14th and 107 on Dec. 26th (JE). Staines Res., maximum 34 on Dec. 30th (HB). Wraysbury Res., present in all months, with maxima of 77 on Jan. 31st and 116 on Dec. 5th (AVM,PN). Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, up to five on the Serpentine on most days up to Mar. 25th, and up to three from Oct. 11th until the end of the year (DAB). Regent's Park, up to five flying over on several dates during the last three months of the year (TD).

- B Queen Mother Res., max. of 20 on Jan. 7th (JE,MTNHS). Also reported at several other localities in the Colne Valley.
- K River Thames at Barking, max. of 26 on Dec. 8th (PJS). Away from the river, the only records were: Bromley Common, one on July 26th (GD). Orpington, nine flew over on Oct. 15th (BB). Sevenoaks G.P., singles on various dates in April and on July 15th, six on Aug. 12th and one or two in November and up to Dec. 9th (AHH).
- S Reported in all months of the year on reservoirs and gravel pits in parties of up to 40 (less during the summer). Queen Elizabeth II Res., max. 120 on Mar. 14th (DGN). Walton Res., max. 45 on Mar. 14th (DGN,CO). Inner London: Up to four seen flying along the River Thames on numerous dates up to the end of March and from Oct. 1st onwards.

29 Shag

- E Fishers Green, three on Aug. 21st (GJW). Wm. Girling Res., singles on Aug. 23rd (PJV) and Sept. 18th (JF). Netherhall G.P., one from Aug. 9th to 12th (GJW), one on Aug. 25th (ccl) and one on Oct. 9th (GJW). Rainham, singles on Jan. 30th and Feb. 13th (MKD). Walthamstow Res., one on Dec. 7th (PF).
- H Rye House Power Station, one on Aug. 12th (GJW).
- K Dartford Creek, one on May 11th (DFY).
- S River Thames at Hammersmith, an immature on Dec. 26th (TJL). Several of the Lea Valley records followed strong north-westerly winds during August.

30 Bittern

- E Fishers Green, one on Jan. 27th and Feb. 27th (GJW,AJC). Waltham Abbey, one from Jan. 5th to 26th (TL). These records may relate to the same bird.
- H Amwell G.P., one found dying on Jan. 8th (LVPG). Cheshunt G.P., up to three in January, up to two in February, and singles on Mar. 26th and Apr. 10th (JF,GJW,LVPG). Rye Meads S.F., one present on several dates up to Jan. 17th (ccl,RMRG). Stocker's Lake, a bird present in December 1981 was seen on Jan. 8th and Feb. 9th (RRD,RDNHS).
- M Singles at Kempton Park on Jan. 23rd (HRG), Bushy Park and Queen Mary Res. on Jan. 30th (HRG,MMP) and Staines Res. on Nov. 7th (BAR).
- K Ruxley G.P., one on several dates in January had been present since Dec. 20th 1981 (SJG).

Recorded every year since 1966 as a winter visitor, fairly regularly at some preferred haunts. The main periods of occurrence are equally divided between December and January with 23 records each since 1970 with February next most commonly recorded with 17. Almost exclusively a winter visitor though there are records in July and August apart from the bird that stayed all year at Rye Meads S.F. in 1974.

35 Squacco Heron 1979 Correction.

- E Hainault Forest, one on June 23rd was rejected by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee and reduces the total to one for the London Area this century.

39 Grey Heron

Widely reported throughout the year in small numbers. Breeding records and large counts are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., 112 occupied nests, a slight decrease on last year's record number (PR). Waltham Abbey, 27 occupied nests (TL). West Thurrock, 98 at roost on Jan. 10th (MS) and 45 on July 10th (GCG).
- H Stocker's Lake, three pairs bred (TRD,RRD).
- M Harefield Moor G.P., 20 occupied nests (JE). No reports were received on the status of the Kempton Park breeding sites. Inner London: Regent's Park, nine pairs raised 23 young (TD).
- B Queen Mother Res., max. count of 24 Feb. 14th (AVM).
- K Dartford Marsh, nine on Feb. 28th (BAF). Sevenoaks G.P., eight on Jan. 11th and 24th, July 31st and 12 on Aug. 25th (AHH).
- S No breeding records received. Highest counts were; Holmethorpe S.P., eight on June 19th, Thorpe Water Park, 13 on Sept. 12th (RS,DKJW).

40 Purple Heron

- S Beddington S.F., one flew over on Apr. 11th (DHH,JBD).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the 13th record for the London Area this century, the last being in 1978.

46 Mute Swan

The numbers of breeding pairs reported are shown in the table below. Although the number reported represents an increase, almost to the level reported in 1980, as many as ten pairs (or approaching 25% of those reported) were noted as being unsuccessful.

	Essex	Herts	Midxx	Inner London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	Total
1981	5	8	10	1	—	2	6	32
1982	9	12	11	3	1	2	6	44

Sector maxima are given or summarized.

- E Walthamstow Res., 30 on June 26th.
- H Amwell G.P., 52 on Dec. 25th. Troy Mill G.P., 63 on Jan. 15th.
- M Queen Mary Res., a flock of between 51 and 61 from mid-July to early August were presumably moulting birds.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 16 in September.
- K Crossness, c.50 on River Thames, Aug. 6th.
- S Thorpe Water Park, between 26 and 28 in January, October and November.

47 Bewick's Swan

- E Walthamstow Res., two flew south on Nov. 14th (GBS).
- M Staines Res., 18 on Feb. 24th (TRD).

48 Whooper Swan

- H/E Cheshunt G.P., a single bird that was present from the beginning of the year until March 6th was also seen at Fishers Green, Essex on Jan. 24th (JF,GJW *et al.*).

50 Pink-footed Goose

See also Appendix I

H Stanstead Abbots G.P., three flew north on Jan. 19th (GJW).

51 White-fronted Goose

See also Appendix I

H Stanstead Abbots G.P., 48 flew south on Oct. 22nd (CCL).

K Sevenoaks G.P., eight on Jan. 10th (AHH).

53 Greylag Goose

All records relate to feral birds, breeding records and large counts are given.

E Walthamstow Res., one pair raised two young (JF).

H Bury Lake, a pair raised two young (HB). Maple Cross S.F., two pairs bred, raising four young (MCRG). Stocker's Lake, one pair raised two young (TRD). A flock of up to 44 was seen at various localities in the Colne Valley throughout the autumn.

M Harefield Moor G.P., three pairs raised at least seven young (JE *et al.*). Inner London: St. James's Park, at least four broods were raised; the maximum autumn count was 40 on Nov. 11th (PJO).

K Sevenoaks G.P., eight pairs raised 27 young; 474, the largest number ever seen at this locality, were present on Sept. 26th (AHH,RHT).

55 Canada Goose

The minimum numbers of broods are summarized in the table, and the larger counts for each sector are given. The total of 136 broods is the largest number ever recorded.

	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Herts</i>	<i>Middx</i>	<i>Inner London</i>	<i>Bucks</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Surrey</i>	<i>Total</i>
Broods	50	28	28	10	3	1	16	136
Sites	4	6	9	2	1	1	6	29

E Walthamstow Res., maxima of 310 on July 25th and 360 on Dec. 4th (RL).

H Stanstead Abbots G.P., 451 on Oct. 4th (BT). West Hyde, at least 320 on Jan. 17th (JE).

M Osterley Park, 274 on Nov. 4th (DGH). Queen Mary G.P., 300+ on Aug. 26th (HRG). Shepperton G.P., 286 on Dec. 3rd (HWE). Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, maxima 285 on Jan. 17th and 310 on Nov. 15th (DAB). St. James's Park, max. 87 on July 22nd (PJO).

B Wraysbury G.P., maximum of 204 during September (FRC *et al.*).

K Sevenoaks G.P., maxima of 112 on Mar. 4th and 209 on Sept. 29th (AHH,RHT).

S Holmethorpe S.P., maxima of 294 on Jan. 10th and 310 on Aug. 28th (RS).

57 Brent Goose

E Rainham, six on Apr. 9th (RF).

M Brent Res., ten on Nov. 2nd (LB,RW) and nine on Dec. 4th (LAB). King George VI Res., eight flew SE on Nov. 7th, the same day 16 arrived from the NE and departed to the SE at Staines Res., (RHT,GAR,BAR).

- K Orpington, 12 flew south on Nov. 7th (RJC), and another flock of 22 geese that flew WSW on the same day were probably of this species (PDG). Sevenoaks G.P., six on Nov. 6th (AHH). Thamesmead, 70 to 80 geese flying west on Nov. 4th were probably Brents (PJS).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 3rd (RRL,TJL). Beddington S.F., 11 on Nov. 7th (GDJM). Kew, one on Mar. 26th (KRH), and about 16 probables on Nov. 5th (RBH).

Large movements of Brent Geese took place throughout south-east England on Nov. 5th to 7th, with groups being seen at many inland localities.

61 Shelduck

This species continues to occur widely, though away from the Lower Thames generally in parties of less than ten. Insufficient details were given for some records to enable an accurate analysis of bird/days to be made, but approximate figures for localities away from the Lower Thames show a marked seasonal pattern, as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
18	25	28	73	72	4	2	20	3	—	19	83

The peak in April and May presumably represents birds passing through and/or seeking suitable breeding areas. The peak in December is accounted for almost entirely by records from Staines Res. Monthly maxima for the Lower Thames and records of breeding or suggestive of breeding are given.

- E Rainham Marsh, four pairs reared young. The monthly maxima for that locality and Barking Reach were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barking	280	400	105	69	20	—	14	88	143	180	143
Rainham	220	200	500	80	—	45	—	—	25	70	110

- M Perry Oaks S.F. and Wraysbury Res., a pair with eight juveniles, probably capable of flight, seen at both localities in July but breeding locality not known. Staines Res., two on single dates in April and May. Queen Mary Res., two to five from February to mid-June but no evidence of breeding.
- B Wraysbury G.P., two in April and May.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., a pair for most of April and May. Crossness, a pair with five young on July 28th, could well have come from Rainham Marsh. Dartford Marsh, 33 to 34 in January and February. Swanscombe, 140 in January and 34 in February. Thamesmead, 83 in January. Other records for the Thames are given under (E) above.
- S Hersham G.P., a pair on single dates in April and May.

WILDFOWL

The method of analysing the monthly winter wildfowl counts has been revised and a paper explaining this and restating the results for the thirty-five seasons to 1981/82 appears on page 97 of this issue. The indices for the latest season, 1982/83, and the four previous winters are given in table 1 together with the highest monthly count for each species made in 1982/83. Counts from the Lower Thames are excluded from all figures in Table 1.

Comments on individual species appear, in **bold type**, in the systematic list but it may be noted here that numbers of almost all

species were well down compared with the harder winter of 1981/82. The aggregate of the peak counts for 1982/83 amounts to only just over 9,000 and with no more than about 2,500 wildfowl on the Lower Thames the total number of ducks in the London Area represents something of a low ebb, there having been fewer only in 1978.

Table 1. Index of mean winter wildfowl counts 1978/79 to 1982/83 and peak counts for 1982/83 (excluding Lower Thames).

	Indices					Peak Count	
	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1982/83	Month
Wigeon	174	117	127	141	115	236	Feb
Gadwall	77	122	145	162	153	226	Jan
Teal	213	167	138	131	134	1,231	Nov
Mallard	156	113	109	101	87	2,413	Nov
Shoveler	93	84	129	151	165	1,263	Nov
Pochard	75	340	82	90	37	654	Jan
Tufted Duck	76	119	92	68	41	2,680	Jan
Goldeneye	70	93	110	128	89	259	Mar
<i>Smew*</i>	148	36	8	56	3	1	Jan
Goosander	286	194	212	260	230	162	Feb

*Index based upon peak counts in each season.

63 Mandarin

This feral species is now regularly seen in many parts of the London Area, but rarely breeds outside the Surrey sector. Only one definite breeding record was received for 1982, and this is given together with a summary of all observations outside the usual breeding areas.

- E Epping Forest, a pair on Feb. 5th (GBS), four on July 24th (SGB) and 11 on Nov. 14th (PB). Single females were seen at Netherhall on Oct. 10th and Nazeing on Nov. 26th (LVPG).
- H Up to five at Rye Meads S.F. from Oct. 10th to Nov. 5th (RMRG, CCl).
- M A drake was seen at several North London localities from April to November. Darland's Lake, a drake in June (DWN). Bushy Park, a female on Oct. 24th (CRAC). Osterley Park, a male on May 28th (DGH).
- B Wraysbury G.P., present throughout the year, with a maximum of 14, including nine drakes, on Dec. 12th (IGJ, JAH *et al.*).
- S One pair bred at the Great Stew Pond, Epsom Common. Buckland S.P., 30 on Sept. 28th (ID).

64 Wigeon

1982/83. See Table 1. Numbers fell marginally, but remained well within the range of the past ten seasons.

1982. The larger counts are given. Elsewhere occurred mainly in flocks of under ten. In the spring, most had left by March with the last records on April 2nd and 3rd, apart from two which remained at Sevenoaks G.P. until June 8th. At the same locality there were four on August 25th; otherwise the first autumn records were mostly in the first ten days of September.

- E Rainham Marsh, 103 on Jan. 16th and 420 on 25th; otherwise no more than 20 reported. Fishers Green, up to 40 in January.
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., 54 on Jan. 2nd.
- M Staines Res., 100 on Jan. 31st and up to 85 in February and March; 32 on Dec. 29th. King George VI Res., 308 on Jan. 17th at a time when

Staines Res. was frozen; 141 on Dec. 11th. Staines Moor, 114 on Jan. 12th. Wraysbury Res., 95 on Jan. 16th. Kempton Park Res., 35 on Jan. 2nd.

- K The highest count in this sector was 17 at Littlebrook G.P. on Jan. 17th.
S Walton Res., 95 on Feb. 25th and 75 on Dec. 31st.

67 Gadwall

1982/83. See Table 1. The index has not changed markedly for three seasons.

1982. This year the traditional sites in Surrey held comparatively few Gadwall and the main flock again occurred at Queen Mary Res. The larger counts and breeding season records are given or summarized.

- E Wm. Girling Res., 24 in January. Chigwell G.P., 45 in January, Rainham Marsh, two pairs in April and May.
H Cheshunt G.P., 60 in February and 70 in October; a pair at the same locality on May 12th. Stocker's Farm, a pair in March and April. Stocker's Lake, a pair summered.
M Brent Res., 15 in February. Staines Res., 34 in February and 23 in December. Queen Mary Res., 82 in January and 36 in November and December. King George VI Res., 28 in January. Wraysbury Res., 30 in March. Harefield Moor G.P., 34 in January and a pair in April.
B Old Slade N.R., 36 in January. Queen Mother Res., 67 in January and 74 in December.
K Orpington, Priory Gardens, six pairs on Apr. 11th and a drake still present on May 3rd. Ruxley G.P., a pair on Apr. 17th and a drake in June and July. Sevenoaks G.P., two to three from April to June; the maximum at that locality was 17 in January.
S Barn Elms Res., 28 in January and 36 in December. Lonsdale Road Res., 21 in October. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 32 in December. Thorpe Water Park, 48 in November.

69 Teal

1982/83. See Table 1. The index has been almost constant for three seasons in spite of covering both a hard winter and a period when Staines Reservoir was drained and thus attracted substantial numbers of this species.

1982. Large counts are given together with details of pairs in the breeding season and Inner London records. Most had departed from the Area by the end of April and, apart from seven at Maple Cross S.F. on July 25th, autumn arrivals away from the Lower Thames did not commence until the second half of August.

- E Wm. Girling Res., 650 in January and 450 in November; Dagenham Chase, 100 in December. The monthly maxima at localities on the Lower Thames were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barking	—	170	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30	2
Rainham	1,600	1,400	420	50	4	4	50	100	250	600	1,800	1,500

The May and June records refer to two pairs which were present throughout that period.

- H Cheshunt G.P., 80 in January, Hilfield Park Res., 40 in November. Maple Cross S.F., 100 in February. Rye Meads S.F., 100 in January. Stanstead Abbots G.P., 51 in January.

- M Brent Res., a pair on Apr. 27th. Staines Res. was drained in the autumn and as in the past quickly attracted flocks of this species; monthly maxima were: September — 200; October — 450; November — 360 and December — 420. King George VI Res., 150 in January. Kempton East Res., 100 in December. Rammey Marsh, 700 in January later moved to Wm. Girling Res. Inner London: Regent's Park, a drake on Feb. 15th.
- B Old Slade N.R., 48 in January. Wraysbury G.P., 46 in February.
- K Dartford Marsh, 120 in January and two on May 6th. Ruxley G.P., a pair in March and the first half of April.
- S Winter monthly maxima at the principal localities were:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Sept</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Barn Elms	174	112	68	17	24	94	96
Queen Elizabeth II	220	105	126	176	50	32	135
Walton Res.,	—	—	42	—	63	200	160

Other large numbers in this sector were: Hogsmill S.F., 150 and Holmethorpe S.P., 80 both in January. Inner London: Surrey Docks, two on Feb. 9th.

70 Mallard

1982/83. See Table 1. The index fell by about 13% to the lowest level ever recorded, emphasising again that neither the mildness nor harshness of the winters in S.E. England necessarily have any direct bearing on the numbers wintering in our Area.

1982. Counts of 300 or more, or, if less, large counts for each sector, are given together with breeding concentrations of ten broods or more and details of an interesting nesting site.

- E Rainham Marsh, 450 in January and 300 in November and December.
- H Rye Meads, 210 and Stocker's Lake, 140 both in January. Amwell G.P., ten broods. Broxbourne G.P., 12 broods. Cheshunt G.P., 42 broods and Stocker's Lake, ten broods.
- M Hampstead Heath, 345 in February. Harefield Moor G.P., 500 in January and 300 in August. Kempton East Res., 300 in November. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, between 350 and 455, January to March and between 270 and 400, October to December; at least 29 broods at the same locality. Substantial numbers were again counted at New River Walk, N1 where ten broods were reported and the maximum counted was 270 on Dec. 2nd. St. James's Park, at least 14 broods. At Essex Road, N1. a pair nested in the enclosed courtyard of an office building.
- B Wraysbury G.P., between 240 and 250 in January and February.
- K Crossness, 260 on the River Thames in November. Dartford, 220 in September. Sevenoaks G.P., 220 in December.
- S Gatton Lake, 450 in October declined to 300 in December. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 220 in January.

72 Pintail

- E Barking, six on Jan. 10th (KB). Rainham Marsh, monthly maxima: January — 170, February — 100, March — 20, October — 134, November — 50, December 80 (KB,MKD,JMH,PJV). Walthamstow Res., five on Nov. 6th (CG).

- H Amwell G.P., a male on Jan. 16th and a female on Apr. 17th (CCL,HNHS). Rye Meads S.F., a pair on Jan. 1st and 2nd, 16 on 3rd, and a single drake to the end of the month (RMRG,GJW), then 13 on Nov. 6th (HNHS). Stocker's Lake, a pair on Nov. 6th and 7th (RRD,IGJ). Troy Mill G.P., three on Jan. 1st (CIB).
- M Wraysbury Res., a drake on Jan. 31st (AVM,PN). Queen Mary Res., five on Feb. 7th (RBH,AVM,PN). Kempton East Res., two on Sept. 11th and one on 19th (RBH,AVM,PN). Staines Res., up to four during October and November, and a pair from Dec. 26th to the end of the year (mo). Inner London: Regent's Park, a drake flew over on Jan. 21st (TD).
- B Old Slade N.R., a drake on Jan. 29th (GAR).
- K Littlebrook G.P., two on Jan. 13th (DFY). Sevenoaks G.P., two on Dec. 13th (AHH). Dartford Marsh, one on Jan. 10th (SJG). Northfleet, 13 flew E on Jan. 9th (LFW). Thamesmead, a pair on Jan. 11th (PJS).
- S Beddington S.F., three on Sept. 25th (GDJM).

73 Garganey

- E King George V Res., two on Apr. 30th (CFN). Netherhall G.P., two on July 18th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, two pairs on Apr. 24th (MKD), up to four birds during July (PJV *et al.*), and two during August and on Sept. 17th (NI,RL).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Aug. 30th and 31st (LVPG). Broxbourne G.P., a pair on Mar. 27th (CCL,GJW). Maple Cross S.F., a drake on Aug. 4th (MCRG). Stocker's Lake, a pair on Apr. 3rd (RRD *et al.*).
- M Ponders End G.P., a pair on Apr. 4th (JF) and five drakes and four ducks on 9th (SJMC). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 1st (JAS). Queen Mary Res., one on Aug. 12th (MJR). Kempton East Res., one on Aug. 18th (AVM,PN). Rammey Marsh, two on Aug. 28th (JF).
- B Wraysbury G.P., six on Sept. 12th (FRC,GCR).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., single birds on three dates between Mar. 18th and May 5th, with two on Apr. 2nd. Singles in autumn between Aug. 22nd and Nov. 27th may relate to one or as many as four individuals. (AHH,RHT).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Aug. 1st (RBH,TJL). Beddington S.F., three on Aug. 28th (GDJM).

75 Shoveler

1982/83. See Table 1. This species continues to increase and the index reached a new all-time peak.

1982. Breeding records are given together with details of pairs in the breeding season or summering birds, and large counts in each sector. The draining of Staines Reservoir in the autumn attracted large numbers and the peak count was the highest for the Area since 720 at Wraysbury Reservoir in November 1978.

- E Two pairs at Rainham Marsh in April. Walthamstow Res., between 230 and 370 from September to November.
- H A female with one young was seen at Stanstead Abbots G.P. on May 7th and a pair summered at Stocker's Lake. Broxbourne G.P., 80 in March. Cheshunt G.P., 80 in October. Rye Meads S.F., 60 in January. Stocker's Lake, 120 in February and 100 in December.
- M Brent Res., a pair and two drakes on June 20th. Harefield Moor G.P., three drakes on June 10th. Perry Oaks S.F., up to six, mostly drakes, summered. Staines Res., the autumn build-up on the drained

reservoir was rapid; there were only 30 on Sept. 21st, but by 27th there were over 350. Thereafter numbers fluctuated markedly, monthly maxima being: October-573; November-638 and December-257. King George VI Res., 539 in September, but numbers did not otherwise exceed 150. Queen Mary Res., up to 320 and 350 in January and February but almost none in the second half of the year presumably because of the attraction of Staines Res. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, present from January to March, maximum of 28 on Feb. 10th. St. James's Park, between 10 and 15 in December.

- B Queen Mother Res., a pair on Apr. 8th.
- K Erith Marsh 30 in January. Dartford, 30 beside the River Thames in October.
- S Barn Elms Res., 98 and Lonsdale Road Res., 50 both in January. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 290 in January. Walton Res., 200 in November. Inner London: Battersea Park, 16 on Feb. 28th.

76 Red-crested Pochard

The status of this species is confused by the occurrence of birds originating from the Royal Parks and other collections, but it is possible that some records are of truly wild birds. This possibility is further reinforced this year when most of the records are in the autumn and winter months.

- H Hilfield Park Res., a drake on Jan. 6th (RRD). Bury Lake, a female on Oct. 9th (HB); this is thought to have been the same bird that was present at Stocker's Lake from Oct. 30th to Nov. 6th (RRD *et al.*).
- M Staines Res., two females or immatures on Oct. 13th and 14th (GMH, RBH *et al.*).
- S Barnes Pond, a pair on Feb. 2nd and 18th, and a drake on Apr. 8th and 15th (RBH). Barn Elms Res., a pair on Apr. 8th (RBH). Lonsdale Road Res., one on Sept. 10th and 11th (PEB). Buckland S.P., a female or immature on Sept. 25th (ID).

77 Pochard

1982/83. See Table 1. There was a serious decline in numbers, the index falling by 60% to its lowest level since the early 1950s. There is no obvious explanation for this, any more than there was for the exceptional numbers that occurred in 1979/80.

1982. There were no sizeable flocks in the Area this year, the largest being only just over 500 at Rainham. Many of the peak counts were in August or September which presumably related to moulting birds; in aggregate these amounted to 900 which is higher than either of the counts in August 1979 when a special survey of moulting diving ducks was made (see *LBR* 44:82); it is also nearly 50% higher than the peak winter count made in 1982/83.

- E Breeding reported from Walthamstow Res. (ten broods) and Rainham G.P. (one brood). These two localities also held the largest flocks in the sector, 510 and 150 at Rainham G.P. in January and December respectively and 110 at Walthamstow Res. in December.
- H One or more pairs bred at Amwell G.P., Cheshunt G.P., Maple Cross S.F., Rye Meads S.F., and Stocker's Lake (where seven pairs summered). Hilfield Park Res., 180 in August. Rye Meads S.F., 160 in January.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., one brood. Osterley Park, three pairs summered but did not breed. Harefield Moor G.P., 200 in August.

King George VI Res., 260 in January. Staines Res., 320 in August. Stoke Newington Res., 140 in January. Wraysbury Res., 150 in January. Inner London: Regent's Park, ten pairs nested. St. James's Park, at least four broods.

- B Old Slade N.R., 82 in February. Wraysbury G.P., 85 in January.
 K Sevenoaks G.P., two in May and June. Dartford, 108 in February. Thamesmead, 100 flew over on Jan. 25th.
 S Barn Elms and Londsedale Road Res., c.100 on each water in September.

79 Ferruginous Duck

It is again necessary to point out the difficulty of distinguishing this species from certain *Aythya* hybrids; in this respect some doubt must attach to the Hertfordshire record. Observers submitting records are asked to pay particular attention in their descriptions to the extent of black on the bill tip.

- H Stocker's Lake, a female on Oct. 30th (RRD).
 M Wraysbury Res., a drake on Jan. 17th (AVM). Little Britain Lake, a drake was observed from Sept. 24th to the end of the year, and may have been present earlier in the year (GMH *et al.*).

1981 Correction

- S Barn Elms Res., the male present from Feb. 11th to Mar. 2nd, May 17th to 20th and on Nov. 9th is now judged to have been a hybrid on the markings of the bill.

80 Tufted Duck

1982/83. See Table 1. Although the fall in the index was less severe than that for Pochard, it reached, in common with that species, its lowest level since the early 1950s. The peak winter count was well under half of the likely peak number moulting in the Area.

1982. The number of breeding sites and minimum number of broods reported were as follows:

		Essex	Herts	Middx	Inner London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	Total
1981	broods	55	54	27	28	2	7	10	183
	sites	8	3	12	2	2	1	7	35
1982	broods	75	73	15	35	4	5	15	222
	sites	11	12	6	5	2	4	7	47

All the known important breeding sites were covered this year and the resulting total of at least 222 broods is similar to the totals for 1975 and 1976 when coverage was also good. It seems likely that numbers may not have changed significantly in the intervening years, the fluctuation in broods reported resulting from changing observer effort. The high mortality among young broods means that many may go undetected unless observations are made every few days. Allowing for undetected broods and nest failures it seems probable that the true breeding population in the London Area is in the range of 400 to 500 pairs. The larger concentrations were: (E), Netherhall G.P. — 20 broods, Walthamstow Res. — 40; (H), Cheshunt G.P. — 18, Rye Meads — 35; Inner London (M) Regent's Park — 14 and St. James's Park — 18. No other locality was reported to have more than five broods.

Moulting flocks were counted in August and numbers totalled 4,590; within this total were 4,200 on waters which, in the last complete moulting survey in 1979 held only 3,600. Probably this reflects merely a shift of birds between waters rather than an absolute increase in the

Area. The largest moulting flocks were at Walthamstow Res. — 1,470 and Staines Res., — 1,250. Largest counts in each sector outside this period were:

- E Walthamstow Res., 1,040 in January and between 530 and 680 from September to December.
- H Hilfield Park Res., 245 in September. Rye Meads S.F., 625 in January (a record count for this locality). Troy Mill G.P., 400 in January.
- M King George VI Res., 520 in January. Harefield Moor G.P., 450 in September. Queen Mary Res., 800 in September. Shepperton G.P., 480 in November. Wraysbury Res., 980 in January. Inner London: St. James's Park, 350 in February.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 790 in February and 690 in November.
- K Thamesmead, 270 in February.
- S Barn Elms Res., 460 in January. Thorpe Water Park, 890 in October. Walton Res., 290 in September.

81 Scaup

Observers are again reminded that certain *Aythya* hybrids can be confused with this species and are therefore asked to submit notes with reference to the head and bill shape and colouration of the back and mantle plumage. Further information on this was given in *L.B.R.*, 36:86(1971).

- E Fishers Green, six on Jan. 9th (GJW). Walthamstow Res., two from Feb. 20th to Mar. 13th (JF).
- H Amwell G.P., two females on Jan. 1st and 3rd, and one on 9th (CCL,LVPG,GJW). Cheshunt G.P., an immature male from Feb. 6th to 23rd (CCL,GJW). Hilfield Park Res., a drake on a number of dates between Mar. 28th and Apr. 30th (CIB,BGR,AVM). Rye Meads S.F., a female from Jan. 4th to Feb. 14th was thought to have been one of the birds seen earlier at Amwell (RMRG). Woodhall Park, a female from Mar. 27th to Apr. 4th (HNHS).
- M Queen Mary Res., a female on Jan. 17th (PCT,AVM,PN) and a male on Mar. 21st (PCT). Staines Res., a female from Feb. 13th to Apr. 4th (LGF *et al.*), and a drake on Nov. 7th (BAR).
- S Inner London: Surrey Docks, a pair during February (DAM).

Aythya hybrid

- M Queen Mary Res., a Tufted × Pochard, with a grey back, on Dec. 5th (AVM,PN).

82 Eider

- E Walthamstow Res., a party of 25, including nine drakes, was seen during a heavy snowstorm on Jan. 9th (LG,RL).
- S Streatham, an obviously sick female on a garden pond on Nov. 1st (AW).

These two records continue the pattern of annual occurrence since 1973; this year produced the largest flock ever seen in the London Area, prior to this the highest number was a flock of ten in March 1917. Most records have been in the period December to March and most probably relate to Dutch breeding birds wintering along the south coast.

87 Common Scoter

- E Wm. Girling Res., three on Mar. 20th (JF), two on 22nd (LVPG *et al.*). King George V Res., a female on Sept. 18th (JF). Walthamstow Res., a drake from Oct. 9th to 14th (JF,AJG).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., a drake on Apr. 18th (GJW).
- M Staines Res., five drakes on Sept. 3rd (GMH,JHt), and a pair on Dec. 29th (HB,LGF,IGJ).
- S Barn Elms Res., single drakes on Aug. 8th (DJB) and Oct. 30th (WR).
- 1981 Correction**
- H Helicon G.P., a drake on Apr 11th (not May 11th) (JE,CIB,RRD).

89 Velvet Scoter

- H Cheshunt G.P., a pair on Jan. 9th (MJH,DNC).
- M Stoke Newington Res., a female on Dec. 23rd (TG).
- B Queen Mother Res., a female from Jan. 10th to 24th (LGF *et al.*).
- The birds at Cheshunt and the Queen Mother Res. arrived on a day of severe weather also affecting Scaup and Eider in some numbers.

91 Goldeneye

1982/83. See Table 1. After five seasons of increase, the index suffered a sharp set-back, though only to the level reached in 1979/80. As frequently happens, the peak count occurred in March, outside the period covered by the index.

1982. Large counts, summering and Inner London records are given.

- E King George V/William Girling Res., 60 in March and 30 in December; an injured drake summered there.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 12 in February. Hilfield Park Res., ten in March. Stocker's Lake, 18 in January and March and ten in December. Troy Mill G.P., 20 in January. A female summered at Rye Meads S.F.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., 30 in January. King George VI Res., 45 in January, 35 in March, 42 on April 10th and 16 in December. Queen Mary Res., 48 in January, 75 in February, 55 in March and 31 in December. Staines Res., 64 in March and 14 in November. Inner London: Hyde Park, two brownheads in cold weather on Jan. 10th and 12th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 31 in January and 17 in November.
- S Queen Elizabeth II Res., 27 in January. Walton Res., 80 in March.

93 Smew

1982/83. See Table 1. For the first time only a single Smew was counted in the course of the regular monthly counts, giving the lowest ever index for this species. This gives a slightly too pessimistic view, however, as synchronised monthly counts are not available from Wraysbury G.P. which although now the most important locality for this species in our Area, cannot therefore be incorporated in the index.

1982. All records are given or summarized; all refer to redheads unless otherwise stated.

- E Fishers Green G.P., one from Jan. 23rd to Mar. 6th. Walthamstow Res., up to four in January and February, the last one being seen on Feb. 28th. William Girling Res., four on Jan. 16th. West Thurrock, one on Feb. 17th and Mar. 20th.

- H Royal Oak G.P., one on Jan. 10th, Stocker's Lake, one from Jan. 3rd to Mar. 14th. Troy Mill G.P., one N on Jan 1st, one present on Jan. 16th and two on 17th. West Hyde G.P., two on Feb. 28th.
- M Brent Res., one on Jan. 11th and Feb. 23rd. Hampton Res., one on Jan. 30th. Harefield Moor G.P., up to three in January and one on Feb. 28th. King George VI Res., two (one drake) on Jan. 16th and five on 17th. Littleton G.P., up to three redheads in January and one on Feb. 7th. Staines Res., up to three (one drake) in January. Stoke Newington Res., up to four (one drake) in January. Wraysbury Res., five on Jan. 17th.
- B Horton G.P., two (one drake) on Feb. 22nd. Queen Mother Res., two (one drake) on Jan. 16th. Wraysbury G.P., monthly maxima were: January — 13 (three drakes), February — six (three drakes) and March — two (one drake) on 3rd, also a female present on Dec. 28th and 30th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., up to three in January and February.
- S Hersham G.P., one on Jan. 29th.

94 Red-breasted Merganser

- H Amwell G.P., a female from Oct. 10th to 30th (LVPG *et al.*).
- M Harefield Moor G.P., a drake on Dec. 6th (IGJ). Queen Mary Res., a female from Feb. 21st, to Mar. 21st (PCT,AVM,PN). Staines Res., singles on Mar. 7th and 11th and from Dec. 12th to 14th (PN,JHT,IGJ *et al.*). Wraysbury Res., two on Jan. 31st (AVM,PN).
- B Queen Mother Res., a female/immature from Jan. 14th to 18th (JE *et al.*) and on Jan. 30th (AVM); this may have been the same bird seen at Wraysbury; another single on Nov. 17th (GAR). Wraysbury G.P., singles on dates between Jan. 9th and Feb. 14th (FRC *et al.*) may have been the same bird seen at Wraysbury Res.
- K River Thames at Blackwall Reach, one on Jan. 10th (PB).

95 Goosander

1982/83. See Table 1. Although the index fell by over 10%, it was still the fourth highest recorded in the past twenty winters.

1982. Large counts or sector maxima are given together with records from the River Thames. The January count from Queen Mary Res. is higher than any gathering recorded during the last freeze-up in 1979 and is the largest flock reported since the unprecedented numbers that occurred on several waters in the freeze-up of early 1963.

- E King George V/Wm. Girling Res., 50 in January and nine in December.
- H Maple Cross S.F., seven on Jan. 7th.
- M Queen Mary Res., a female summered; winter monthly maxima there were: January — 146, February — 82, March — 65 and December — nine. King George VI Res., 65 in January and 41 in March. Staines Res., 34 in January, 31 in March and 27 in December. Wraysbury Res., 45 in January and 41 in February.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 25 in January and 50 in February.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., four in January and February.
- S Queen Elizabeth II Res., 25 and Walton Res., 12 both in January. This duck is normally seen exclusively on reservoirs, lakes or gravel pits but this year small numbers occurred on the River Thames, initially during freezing conditions: Hampton Court, up to six on 11 days in January and the first half of February. Shepperton, up to three from January to March.

96 Ruddy Duck

No records of breeding or attempted breeding were received this year and the summer numbers reflect this cessation, though it should be noted that the original site has recently suffered from habitat destruction. The numbers present in January were the largest ever recorded in the Area and the tendency to gather on the reservoirs in the Wraysbury and Walton areas is developing into a regular pattern.

- E Wm. Girling Res., up to six during January (AJG *et al.*). King George V Res., two on Jan. 23rd (JF). Walthamstow Res., up to five in January (JF).
- H Hilfield Park Res., a male on Jan. 23rd, a female on Apr. 8th and a male on Apr. 23rd (CIB). Stocker's Lake, a drake on May 23rd and 29th (HB,ES). Troy Mill G.P., up to three between Jan. 1st and 23rd (CIB *et al.*).
- M Hampton Res., one on Jan. 17th (AM). Harefield Moor G.P., up to three on numerous dates up to June 12th and from Oct. 9th onwards. Kempton East Res., a female on Aug. 8th (AVM,PN). King George VI Res., present in January, with a maximum of 13 on 16th (PN,JAH). Staines Res., reported in January, September and December, with a maximum of six on Jan. 24th (AVM,PN *et al.*). Stain Hill Res., three on Mar. 7th (AVM,PN). Stoke Newington Res., three females on Jan. 12th, and one on 30th and 31st (NB,PJC,TG). Wraysbury Res., eight on Jan. 16th (JAH,PN) and 17 on 17th (AVM). Inner London: Regent's Park, a drake on July 30th (TD).
- B Queen Mother Res., up to seven in January (IGJ,PAW *et al.*). Wraysbury G.P., up to six in January (JHT).
- S Barn Elms Res., a duck on Jan. 3rd (TJL). Walton Res., present during January, with a maximum of 20 on 31st (SDBWS).

98 Black Kite**1980 Additional Record**

- E Navestock/Ongar, one found dead (cause of death unknown) on Oct. 1st and is now preserved in Colchester Museum (*per* J. Miller).
Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the second record for the London Area this century and follows closely the first in April 1979.

99 Red Kite

- M Hanworth, one flew SW on Jan. 10th (APGS).
The first in winter and the eleventh record for the London Area this century, five of which have been in the last four years.

103 Marsh Harrier

- E Sewardstone, a female on May 8th (PR) and another at Rainham on Aug. 28th (MS).
- S Woodmansterne, one flew ENE on Apr. 19th (PJS).
An average showing, taking the total for the London Area to 26 this century.

104 Hen Harrier

- E Rainham Marsh, up to three 'ring-tails' from January to March with two still there on Apr. 5th and one staying to May 15th; in addition a male there from Jan. 13th to 15th and another 'ring-tail' present on Oct. 9th (MKD,IT *et al.*).

- K Crayford Marsh, a 'ring-tail' on Feb. 16th (DFY). Dartford Marsh, a 'ring-tail' on Jan. 1st and probably the same bird there on Feb. 28th (PFC,BAF).

104/106 Harrier *sp.*

- M Queen Mary Res., a 'ring-tail' that flew W on Oct. 16th was considered to have been a Hen Harrier (DSD).

108 Sparrowhawk

- E Reported from 11 localities with a total of over 20 sightings, all, in the periods from January to March and from October to December, except two in May.
- H Fairly well reported, especially in the winter months but there were also nine records in the breeding season including a pair in early May displaying and carrying twigs and a pair present all summer at another locality.
- M Records were received from 25 localities concerning in excess of 100 birds but doubtless considerable duplication involved. Over a quarter of the records came from Staines Reservoir. Very few summer records except from Queen Mary Res., Darlands Lake and Harefield Moor G.P. Only one record of a pair together and that was in early May.
- B Reported from one area from February to August and again in December, only one other record from a second locality.
- K Well distributed in the winter months but no records, apart from a single female in one locality, in the summer months.
- S Only three pairs are known to have bred. Surprisingly, no records at all from the usual centre of nesting success, thus the true strength of the species is a little obscure or possibly clouded in secrecy. In addition, five pairs were seen together in the months of April and May and several other areas reported single birds present in the summer months. Well reported from many areas in the winter.

109 Buzzard

- H Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 14th (RMRG). Watford, one flew over on Sept. 9th (M. Gerrard *per* HNHS).
- S Thornton Heath, one from Nov. 28th to mid-December. The possibility that it was an escape seems most likely, despite being unapproachable, it had only half a tail and remained in the vicinity of some allotments or nearby trees (LO).

97/109 Buzzard *sp.*

- E Buckhurst Hill, one on Sept. 14th (IL). Havering, one on July 12th (MJA). Highams Park, one on Feb. 3rd (EFCC) and another at Thorndon Park on Sept. 8th (RB).

113 Osprey

- H Three records all in May; Rye Meads S.F., one flew S on the 2nd (RMRG), another at Stocker's Lake on the 10th (RRD,TRD) and one at Broxbourne G.P. on the 13th (RMRG).
- M Brent Res., one on Mar. 28th (LB). Harefield Moor G.P., one on Oct. 10th (IGJ).

- S Caterham School, one flew W on May 24th (SJH). Barn Elms Res., one arrived from the north and departed to the west on Sept. 9th (AGV).

Another good year with spring records again outnumbering those in the autumn. The Brent Reservoir record is now the second earliest arrival date, displacing the Apr. 12th 1981 record from Surrey.

115 Kestrel

All reports of breeding are summarized in the following table:

	Essex	Herts.	Mx/Bucks.	Inner London	Kent	Surrey	Total
Proved breeding	7	3	5	6	10	16	47
Possible breeding	17	6	9	4	4	12	52
							99

An outstandingly successful year or just very well reported? After the downward trend of the last four years these figures are the highest since 1971 and show an increase of up to 20% on recent years. Most noticeable are the increases in Essex, Herts., and Kent and not so surprisingly in Surrey. Also welcome is the return to pre-1979 Inner London figures, especially of proven breeding. Encouraging news for conservationists is that three pairs bred in specially set up nest-boxes.

All Inner London breeding season records are given below:

Bishopsgate, one pair bred on top of a building raising two young (*per* OC). Fulham, singles on three dates in June and August (PJS). Goldborne Road/Kensal Road W10, one pair bred near Trellick Tower (PEB). Guy's Hospital, one pair present (DAM). Islington Green, one pair between March and November (TG). Redcliffe Square SW10, one pair bred on St. Luke's church raising two young (BE). Regent's Park, two pairs bred (TD). St. Peter St. SW1, one pair nested on St. Matthew's church, probably rearing two young (SJMC). Surrey Docks, one pair probably bred (DAM). Waterloo/Lambeth, one pair present throughout the summer (PJS).

118 Merlin

- E Rainham Marsh, one on Jan. 23rd and Feb. 13th and another on Oct. 30th, Dec. 4th and 18th (MKD,NI).
 H Amwell G.P., one on Mar. 5th (BR).
 M Harmondsworth, a female or immature on Dec. 20th (APGD).
 K Dartford Marsh, a female or immature on Jan. 10th went off over the River Thames towards Essex (SJG).

A good showing, on a par with the five records in 1979.

119 Hobby

All records refer to single birds unless otherwise stated.

- E Hornchurch, July 18th (AS). Netherhall G.P., June 27th and Aug. 2nd, 10th and 15th (GJW,DNC). North Stifford, Sept. 28th (PJS). Romford, Sept. 5th (MKD). Rainham Marsh, two on May 8th but one on several dates until July 29th (MKD).
 H Amwell G.P., almost daily from July 4th to Sept. 25th (GJW,LVPG). Broxbourne G.P., July 3rd (HNHS). Cheshunt G.P., May 9th and July 25th (GJW,JF). Cole Green, Sept. 7th (HNHS). Hilfield Park

Res., Aug. 14th (CIB). Maple Cross S.F., June 29th, Sept. 3rd (TRD,JKA). Rickmansworth, May 25th (TRD). Rye Meads S.F., three on May 12th and singles on four dates from July 25th to Sept. 6th (mo). South Mimms, Sept. 7th (HNHS). Stanstead Abbots G.P., Aug. 22nd and Sept. 11th (GJW,HNHS). Stocker's Lake, singles on three dates in May and one on Aug. 11th (RRD,TRD). Symondshyde and Theobalds Park, Aug. 1st (HNHS).

- M Harefield, July 18th (PN). Hounslow Heath, one in June (*per* DGH). London Airport, Sept. 8th (JHT). Osterley Park, May 23rd (DGH). Perry Oaks S.F., two on May 2nd (AVM,PN). Queen Mary Res., two on Aug. 7th and 10th (HJF,LGF,JHT). Ruislip N.R., Sept. 4th (JE). Staines Moor, up to three between Aug. 7th and 30th (mo). Staines Res., one on May 1st then up to three from Aug. 7th to Sept. 10th, doubtless the same birds seen at Staines Moor.
- B Denham, May 1st and July 10th (RDNHS). Wraysbury, June 13th (AVM,PN).
- K Chislehurst, two on July 26th (PA,SSH,TJT). Littlebrook G.P., July 4th (PJ). Lullingstone July 28th (PDG). Orpington area, one seen on seven occasions in August and September (BB,RDn). Sevenoaks G.P., July 27th (AHH). West Wickham, July 26th (RK).
- S Ashted Common, June 15th and 27th (DL,PM,SMn). Barn Elms Res., Apr. 21st and Aug. 13th (RBH,JPPW). Beddington S.F., Aug. 11th (DAC). Cheam Village, Aug. 26th (SWG). Epsom, singles on three dates in September (ESB). Kingston Vale, Sept. 5th (BAM). Nutfield Marsh, two on Apr. 22nd. Woodmansterne, Aug. 30th (PJS).

As in the last three years 1982 was also a good year with birds widely reported. Again there are no breeding records or reports of birds displaying, but it is clear from the number of summer sightings that birds are not far away and the possibility of breeding in the Area once more remains extremely high.

123 Peregrine

- E Rainham Marsh, one seen on Sept. 12th but recent kills at that time indicate that the bird had been present longer (MKD).
- M Staines Res., an immature male on Oct. 26th (Pct). Uxbridge RAF station, a female on Dec. 25th (THJ).

A good showing, the first year since 1969 when there have been more than two records.

129 Red-legged Partridge

Distribution of pairs in the breeding season and large numbers are given.

- E Wm. Girling Res., one pair. Hainault, eight pairs. Rainham four pairs. Roding Valley, five pairs. Sewardstone, at least one pair bred. Hainault, 24 on Sept. 18th and 15 at Netherhall G.P. on Nov. 27th.
- H Colney, 12 on Sept. 30th and approximately the same number at Symondshyde on Feb. 13th.
- M Burtonhole Farm, Mill Hill, one pair. Darlands Lake, one family party seen. Osterley Park, possibly one pair present. Perry Oaks S.F., a pair seen with one young. Brown's Fields, Harlington, up to six present from January to July. Maximum of five on Aug. 16th at Perry Oaks S.F.

- K Dartford Marsh, up to three pairs. Littlebrook G.P., two pairs. Swanscombe Marsh, four on Jan. 3rd.
 S Godstone Res. N.R., present all year with max. of 16 on Jan. 9th. Holmethorpe S.P., a pair in May.

130 Grey Partridge

Breeding season localities (one pair unless otherwise stated) and coveys of over five are given.

- E Barking, three pairs. Hainault, two pairs. Rainham, two pairs.
 H Broxbourne G.P., two pairs bred and nine birds there on Oct. 9th. Amwell G.P., six on Jan. 7th. Leavesden, six on Jan. 23rd. Old Parkbury, ten on Sept. 2nd. Panshanger, eight on Nov. 14th.
 M Highway Farm, Harefield, two pairs. Hounslow Heath, one pair. Osterley Park, up to 12 pairs. Hampton Court Park, ten on Jan. 9th. Queen Mary G.P., nine on Nov. 11th.
 B Woodlands G.P., one pair.
 K Chelsfield, one pair, 15 on Aug. 28th. Dartford Marsh, max. of 26 on Dec. 18th. Littlebrook G.P., up to 15 present throughout the year.
 S Walton Res., eight on Dec. 12th.

133 Pheasant

No significant change in the population but much better reported than in recent years. Some breeding season and winter flocks are given.

- H Great Westwood, at least 12 in March and 15 in December.
 M Osterley Park, at least five females present and breeding confirmed.
 K Breeding reported from six sites.
 S Kingswood, an all-white bird with red wattles seen in Woodland Way on Feb. 11th.

136 Water Rail

Numbers of records received show a fairly typical distribution throughout the Area in the winter months. The table below shows the pattern of monthly occurrence covering all records. In contrast to 1981 the main month is January, but this possibly reflects a pattern of prevailing severe weather.

<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Sept</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
54	22	15	8	1	11	21	21

There were no confirmed breeding records but birds were heard calling from two suitable locations in May and June. All sites of winter occurrence are given (singles unless otherwise stated).

- E Barking, Berwick Ponds (2), Hornchurch, Rainham Marsh, Waltham Abbey, Walthamstow Res. and West Thurrock.
 H Cassiobury Park (4), Cheshunt G.P. (4), Hampermill Lake, Maple Cross S.F., Rye Meads S.F. (6), Stocker's Lake (2), Troy Mill G.P.
 M Alexandra Park, Bedfont Quarry (3), Brent Res. (7), Darland's Lake, Hampstead Heath, Harefield Moor, Little Britain Lake, Queen Mary G.P., Springwell Watercress Beds (2) and Staines Moor. Inner London: St. James's Park, one on Mar. 17th and one in Goswell Road, EC1 on Dec. 6th (JPW,NB).
 B Old Slade N.R., Thorney Weir, Wraysbury G.P. (2).
 K Beckenham Park, Dartford Marsh, Foots Cray Meadows (3), Orpington, Ruxley G.P. (4), Sevenoaks G.P. (2), Stone Marsh.
 S Barn Elms Res., Beddington S.F. (2), Buckland S.P., Hersham S.F., Hogsmill S.F., Holmethorpe S.P., Richmond Park (2), Waddon Ponds.

137 Spotted Crake

- H Amwell G.P., one from Sept. 12th to Oct. 2nd (GJW,CCL,JF *et al.*).
 S Inner London: Waterloo Bridge Car Park, one, an adult, found injured on Sept. 29th was rescued and taken to London Zoo hospital where it died on Oct. 14th (MAN).

Almost annual in occurrence in the London Area in recent times, the fourth year in succession that birds have been recorded.

142 Moorhen

Large counts and Inner London breeding records are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, 100 in January. Bulphan Fen, 64 in December.
 H Cassiobury Park, max. of 117 on Mar. 14th. Maple Cross S.F., 50 in January and 80 in November. Rye Meads S.F., 64 in November. Troy Mill G.P., 66 in December.
 M Inner London: Chelsea Creek, one pair bred raising five young (TAHS). New River Walk, N1, one pair bred (TG), St. James's Park, one pair bred (PJO); William Curtis Ecological Park, one pair bred raising two young (DAM,TAHS).
 K Dartford Marsh, 25 in February. Beckenham, Kelsey Park, 23 in November. Littlebrook G.P., 30 in March. Sevenoaks G.P., 60 in January.
 S Beddington S.F., 50 throughout January and February. Hersham S.F., 20 in February.

145 Coot

For the first time a substantial number of records of breeding pairs was received from the Essex and Herts. sectors, notably from GJW. A total of 346 pairs was reported from these two sectors which may be compared with a maximum population of only 419 pairs reported in 1957 in a survey which, while not wholly complete, covered the whole of our Area (Homes *et al.* 1960, *L.B.R.*, 23 : 54-61) and a total of 236 tetrads from which breeding was reported during the Atlas survey (Montier, 1977, *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the London Area*). Winter counts in 1982/83 were also much more complete than ever before and enable some assessment to be made of just how abundant this species is in the London Area. The monthly counts (unadjusted for waters missed in some months) were as follows: September — 3,100; October — 4,300; November — 4,600; December — 3,400; January — 3,900; February — 2,500; March 2,100. Between 20% and 25% of these totals was consistently accounted for by records from Shepperton G.P. A summary of the breeding counts from Essex and Herts. other breeding concentrations and large flocks are given.

- E A total of 123 breeding pairs reported from eight sites, of which 40 were at Walthamstow Res. At that locality there were 470 in January and February; numbers reduced to 160 in May followed by a steady build-up to 555 in September, declining thereafter.
 H A total of 222 breeding pairs reported from nine sites, the largest concentrations being 79 at Cheshunt G.P. and 44 at Rye Meads S.F. Broxbourne G.P., 410 in January. Cheshunt G.P. 620 in January and 680 to 700 in November and December. Rye Meads S.F., 490 in November. Troy Mill G.P., 800 in January and 500 in September, October and December. River Colne and Grand Union Canal between Rickmansworth and Troy Mill G.P., 600 in November and December.

- M Queen Mary Res., 400 to 460 in January and from September to November. Shepperton G.P., winter monthly counts were as follows: January — 626; February — 526; March — 337; September — 612; October — 1,034; November — 1,048; December 1,070. Stoke Newington Res., 400 in January and November. Inner London: St. James's Park, 16 pairs nested.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 470 in September and between 310 and 400 from October to December.
- K Littlebrook G.P., six pairs bred. Sevenoaks G.P., 11 pairs bred.
- S Holmethorpe S.P., seven pairs bred. Thorpe Water Park, 550 in January, 785 in February, 600 in November and 690 in December. Walton Res., 410 in October.

146 Crane

- E Rainham Marsh, one on May 15th (MKD,NI).

The fourth record for the London Area this century and the first since June 1973, this bird was also seen the same day further down the Thames estuary at Leigh-on-Sea. The record has been accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

151 Oystercatcher

A large number of records, and reported in every month of the year. Particularly of note was the number of birds seen in January, with a surprisingly large movement on Jan. 2nd, which seems to have been mostly confined to the Lea Valley, although it is not clear how many flocks were involved.

- E Dagenham, one on Feb. 19th (MKD). Fishers Green G.P., seven on Jan. 2nd (IDG). King George V Res., one on Apr. 10th (PR), and two on Aug. 15th (PIV). Netherhall G.P., one on Apr. 11th (CCL). Rainham Marsh, one on Mar. 13th, and a pair in April and May which attempted to breed, but were flooded out; also 14 on May 18th, and up to four in June, and three in July; four on Nov. 13th (MKD,JMH,NI). Roydon, six on Jan. 2nd (GJW), part of the same flock seen at Fishers Green. Thurrock, two on Apr. 11th (MS), and one on July 10th (GCG). Walthamstow Marsh, one on Aug. 29th (TG). Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 25th (JF).
- H Amwell G.P., 18 on Jan. 2nd (GJW), and singles on Jan. 12th and Apr. 11th (LVPG). Cheshunt G.P., singles on Jan. 15th and 17th (GJW). Chorleywood, one heard flying over at night on Sept. 1st (JKA). Rye Meads, two on Jan. 2nd (GJW). Stocker's Lake, one on Dec. 6th (TRD,RDNHS).
- M East Finchley, one flew N on July 5th (PIC). Harefield Moor G.P., four on Jan. 2nd (RDNHS). Staines Res., two on Mar. 14th, singles on July 29th, Aug. 24th, Sept. 3rd, Oct. 26th, and Oct. 30th (mo). West Ruislip, one flew over on Mar. 8th (JE).
- K Chislehurst, at least one heard calling at night on May 7th (KHP). Dartford Marsh, a pair present on several dates in May, but no evidence of breeding (DRG,DFY). River Thames at Purfleet, one on Aug. 3rd (PJS). Swanscombe Marsh, two on Jan. 3rd (BAF), and one in early March (DRG).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 22nd (PHM). West Ewell, one on Aug. 3rd (PS), and one from Aug. 5th 'stayed for about a week' on playing fields (ARL).

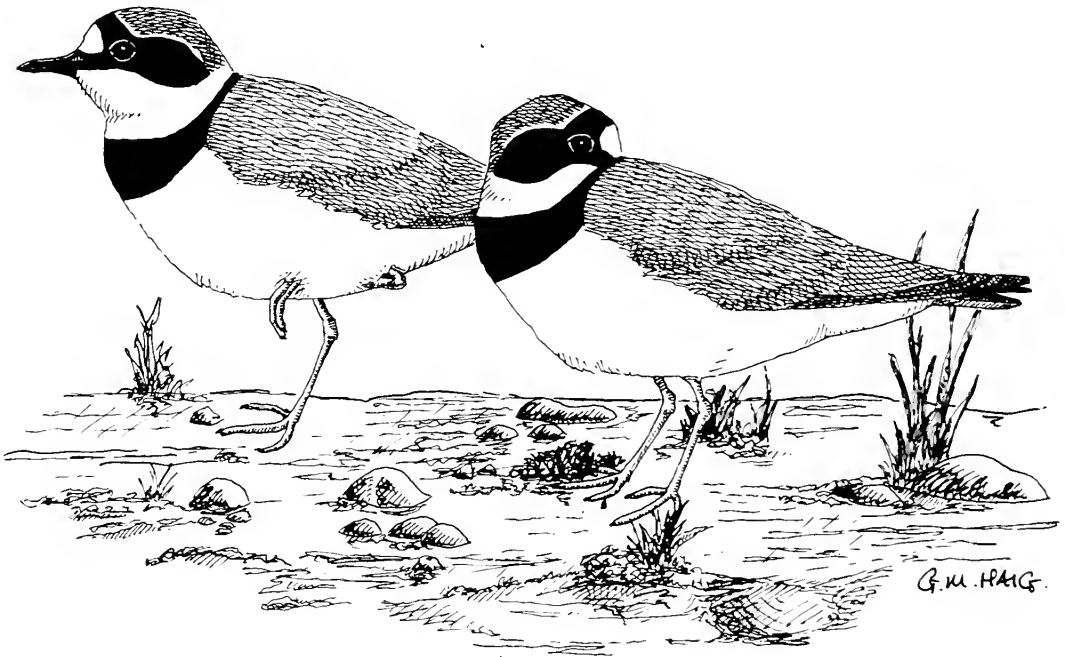
153 Avocet

Now an annual passage migrant through the London Area in small numbers. Most records are in the months March to June, with a few in autumn and winter.

- H Hilfield Park Res., six on Apr. 2nd, were swimming in the middle of the reservoir (CIB).
 M Staines Res., one on Nov. 10th (GMH,JHT), and two from Dec. 24th to 28th (APGd *et al.*) with one bird remaining into 1983.

154 Stone-curlew

- H At one site, a pair on Apr. 24th and 25th, and a single bird still present on May 1st (locality and observer's name withheld).
 S Beddington S.F., one on July 21st (DHH,MJN).

158 Little Ringed Plover

Breeding season records are summarized in the following table.

	Sites	Pairs proved breeding	Other pairs present	Total
E	10	7	12	19
H	8	9	13	22
M	7	7	1	8
B	2	3	1	4
K	2	3	2	5
S	2	2	2	4
Totals	31	31	31	62

In the absence of a special survey, it is almost certain that many pairs go unreported. First arrivals in spring were two on the early date of Mar. 14th at Amwell G.P. (GJW). The largest concentration of breeding pairs was at a site in Hertfordshire, where eight pairs nested, and 29 were present on June 27th (HNHS). In autumn, Rainham Marsh again proved its importance as a major staging post for this species, with a peak count of 62 on July 31st (KB). Other high counts in July included 16 at Kempton East Res. on 21st (RBH), 17 at

Perry Oaks S.F. on 15th (JAS), and 20 at Stanwell Place G.P. on 10th (PN). The last record of the year was of four at Rainham Marsh on Oct. 4th (MKD).

159 Ringed Plover

This species winters along the Lower Thames in some numbers, but is usually absent from inland sites between November and January. A few breeding birds return to inland localities from early February. The first record this year away from the River Thames was at Rye Meads on Feb. 6th (RMRG), followed by a small influx in March. The later spring passage of Arctic breeding birds, usually in May/early June was not in evidence this year. Autumn passage produced rather low numbers along the Thames, but conversely very good flocks at Perry Oaks S.F. Most areas recorded a sharp peak between Aug. 18th and 20th. All breeding records are given, together with the highest counts of migrant and wintering flocks.

- E Hornchurch, a pair present but not known to have bred (MKD). Netherhall G.P., at least four birds summered (GJW). Rainham Marsh, four pairs present, one of which was successful; monthly maxima of 30 on Jan. 9th, 100 on Feb. 27th, 75 on Mar. 6th, 30 on Apr. 3rd, 38 on May 11th, 80 on Aug. 19th, and up to 20 in November and December (MKD *et al.*). Thurrock, one pair may have bred; 50 on Feb. 16th, 92 on Aug. 11th, and 117 on Sept. 15th (MKD, JMH).
- H Amwell G.P., four pairs present in June, but no evidence of breeding (GJW). Cole Green, one pair bred (HNHS).
- M Kempton East Res., 14 on Aug. 18th (AVM, PN). Perry Oaks S.F., two pairs bred successfully; 50 or more on every date between Aug. 15th and 25th (mo), maximum of 99 on Aug. 20th (JAS). Staines Res., 11 on Sept. 8th (JE) and Oct. 3rd (PN), last three on Oct. 26th (JAH).
- B Wraysbury G.P., two pairs in April, but both were unsuccessful, and at least one nest was destroyed by predators (RRG).
- K Dartford Marsh, 17 on Jan. 10th, 32 on Feb. 7th, and 53 on Mar. 14th. River Thames at Purfleet, 66 on Aug. 3rd, and 140 on Sept. 28th (PJS). Swanscombe Marsh, a pair probably bred; 100+ on Jan. 3rd, and 30+ in November and December (BAF, DRG).
- S Beddington S.F., 11 on Aug. 20th (SJA, JHT). Walton-on-Thames, a pair displaying in April (JRM).

165 Golden Plover

- E Fairlop, 140 on Feb. 6th (MKD). Hainault, six on Mar. 23rd (MKD). Nazeing Common, c.50 on Oct. 4th (MC). Rainham Marsh, two on Mar. 13th, singles on July 31st, Aug. 1st and Oct 1st (DSB, NI, MKD).
- H Near London Colney, 52 on Nov. 24th (HNHS). Maple Cross, two on Dec. 25th (JRBS). Rye Meads S.F., 24 flew N on Feb. 14th (GJW). Stanstead Abbots G.P., 90 on Mar. 11th (GJW). Symondshyde area, 148 on Feb. 14th, and 191 on Mar. 16th (HNHS).
- M Staines Moor, one on Jan. 16th (LGF), five on Mar. 15th (JHT) and 36 on Dec. 13th (LGF). Staines Res., five flew W on Sept. 15th (AVM), up to 14 in October, and then regularly from Nov. 7th to the end of the year, maxima of 21 on Nov. 22nd (IGJ), and 50 on Dec. 27th (CWW). Inner London: Regent's Park, ten flew N on Apr. 25th (TD).
- K Dartford Marsh, two on Feb. 7th (KHP). Orpington, 50 or 60 flew SSW on Jan. 8th (BB).
- S Beddington S.F., two on Jan. 3rd and one on Feb. 20th (AV, DAC) and two on Nov. 22nd (GDJM).

166 Grey Plover

The January records reflect the cold weather pattern. Generally most birds occur in the London Area as passage migrants between April and mid-June and in late autumn from mid-September to early December. The strength of the autumn passage was amply demonstrated by records from Staines Res., the drained north basin of which was a 'mud flat' during the last three months of the year.

- E Barking, one on Jan. 10th (KB). King George V Res., two on Nov. 7th (PJV). Netherhall G.P., one on May 13th (WGL). Rainham Marsh, singles reported on Jan. 1st, 9th and 16th, Apr. 24th, May 8th, 11th, 12th and 15th, July 8th and 10th, Oct. 9th and Nov. 13th (MKD, JMH, NI, PJV).
- H Amwell G.P., one on May 13th (*per* LVPG).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Nov. 5th (JAS). Staines Res., one on Aug. 25th. Following drainage of the north basin, there were five on Oct. 4th (GAR), and then two on 8th, one on 9th, eight on 10th, and singles on four dates between Oct. 12th and 18th, with up to three between 21st and 26th (mo). A flock of 20 was seen on Nov. 5th (APGD), followed by two on Nov. 7th, and singles on Nov. 9th, 11th, and 13th, Dec. 2nd and 6th — a total of 62 birds on 21 dates.
- K Broadness, Swanscombe, seven on Jan. 10th (LFW, SLW).
- S Beddington S.F., one flew N on Nov. 4th (SJA).

169 Lapwing

Despite very heavy snow in the first half of January, very few cold weather movements were seen. Most had probably moved out of the area following equally severe conditions in December 1981. Many birds returned by the end of January, and some large flocks built up in the following three weeks. Highest counts were: Old Slade N.R., 1,000 on Jan. 31st (BBC), West Hyde, 1,100 on Feb. 13th (TRD, AVM), and Manor Farm, Horton, 1,000 on Feb. 14th (AVM, PN). At least 140 pairs were reported in the breeding season. The long westerly movement from the Continent in mid-summer, which is such a feature of this species, was again noted from about June 4th, and continued throughout the the summer months, merging into the autumn migration by September. There were 1,000 back at Old Slade N.R. by August (BBC), and high numbers at Staines Res. included up to 1,000 in October (JE, CWW).

170 Knot

- E Walthamstow Res., one on Jan. 8th (PF). West Thurrock, one on Sept. 15th (JMH).
- M Staines Res., one from Sept. 24th to Oct. 3rd (GMH, JHT *et al.*), and another on Oct. 30th (RBH, AVM, PN).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., singles on Sept. 16th and 18th, and from Sept. 23rd to 28th (AHH).

171 Sanderling

Typically most of the sightings of this species were in May. It is less regular in autumn, and the occasional winter records are normally associated with cold weather.

- E Rainham Marsh, three on May 15th (MKD). Walthamstow Res., one on May 20th (PF).

- M London Airport, one with Ringed Plovers on May 27th (JAS). Perry Oaks S.F., four on May 3rd (RBH,AVM,PN). Staines Res., two on May 2nd (GMH), and one on Sept. 5th (PN). Wraysbury Res., one on May 3rd (CJH,JAH *et al.*).

175 Little Stint

A very poor autumn for this species, as the total lack of September records from Rainham Marsh testifies.

- E Rainham Marsh, one on Jan. 23rd (MKD), had been present since December 1981 the first winter record since 1977. Only three autumn records of singles on July 25th (MKD), Aug. 19th and 20th, and Oct. 17th (NI).
- M Kempton East Res., one on Sept. 23rd (HWE). Perry Oaks S.F., singles on Aug. 9th, 16th and 30th, two between Sept. 3rd and 5th, and one on Oct. 27th (TRD,AVM,PN,JAS). Staines Res., present on the north basin from Oct. 3rd, with up to three on many dates during the month, maximum of four on Oct. 17th and 23rd. In November, singles on 2nd, 4th, 7th, and 9th (mo).

176 Temminck's Stint

- E Netherhall G.P., one on May 11th (ccl). Rainham Marsh, one on Sept. 25th (MKD), was joined by a second bird from Sept. 26th to 28th (RJck, AJG,NI).

179 Baird's Sandpiper

- M Staines Res., one from Oct. 14th to the end of the year (GMH,JHT,GAR *et al.*), remained until Apr. 24th 1983.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the third record of this Neartic species for the London Area this century. The two previous records were at Perry Oaks S.F., from Sept. 15th to 22nd, 1950, and at Rainham Marsh on Sept. 3rd 1977. Normally only a rare vagrant to Britain in autumn, this is the first ever recorded instance of wintering in the Western Palaearctic. Further details appear on p.87.

180 Pectoral Sandpiper

- E Rainham Marsh, one from Sept. 15th to 28th (JMH *et al.*).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 16th (RRD,TRD,AVM,PN) and another from Aug. 31st to Sept. 5th (JAS *et al.*). Staines Res., one on Sept. 30th (JHT, JAS), and what was considered to be a different bird from Oct. 6th to 14th (APGd,GMH,JHT *et al.*).

Whilst there may have been some duplication in the Middlesex records, they are treated here as four different birds. Five records in one year is without precedent, and sustains the increase in birds reaching the London Area in the last few years.

182 Curlew Sandpiper

There were no spring records. Numbers in autumn were below that of a good year, although they outnumbered Little Stints in September and October.

- E Rainham Marsh, ten on Sept. 15th, nine on 17th and 18th, eight on 20th, five on 25th, three on 28th and Oct. 2nd, and five on Oct. 3rd (MKD,IT,NI *et al.*).

- M Kempton East Res., one on July 11th, two on Sept. 8th and one on 11th. Perry Oaks S.F., two or three between Sept. 3rd and 8th, five on Sept. 9th, and four on 10th. Staines Res., four on Sept. 9th and 10th, five the next day, and one on 12th; two from Sept. 22nd to 24th, and four from Sept. 29th to Oct. 3rd, and up to five until Oct. 9th. Further singles between Oct. 15th and 23rd, and a late bird on Nov. 13th (AVM,PN *et al.*).

184 Dunlin

The highest counts were as usual along the Lower Thames and adjacent marshes, although numbers here remained at a relatively low level. Elsewhere, drainage of Staines Res. north basin at the end of the year produced the largest numbers in West Middlesex since 1978. Small parties occurred at many other sites in winter and passage months, but with no clear pattern emerging, although there were 41 birds at 10 localities away from the Thames on May 2nd and 3rd. The largest counts are given.

- E Rainham Marsh, monthly maxima of 1,000 on Jan. 23rd, 500 on Feb. 27th, 450 on Mar. 13th, 12 on Apr. 3rd, 15 on May 8th, 12 on July 21st, 35 in August, increasing to 250 in October, 1,000 in November, and 600 in December. West Thurrock, at the beginning of the year, 600 on Jan. 10th, 700 on Feb. 17th, 260 on Mar. 20th, and 37 on Apr. 11th. Highest count at the end of the year was 78 on Dec. 16th.
- M Perry Oaks S.F., 22 on May 3rd, and up to 12 in August. Queen Mary Res., 27 on Feb. 24th. Staines Res., c. 20 flying over on Jan. 30th. At the end of the year, numbers rapidly built up from 23 on Oct. 3rd to 110 on Oct. 23rd, and remained fairly constant in the last two months with peaks of 135 on Nov. 13th, and 138 on Dec. 11th.
- K River Thames at Barking, 300 on Feb. 5th, 300 on Nov. 24th, and 400 on Dec. 8th. Dartford Marsh, only four on Jan. 10th increased to 200 by the end of February; 280 on Dec. 18th. Swanscombe, 150 on Jan. 10th, 200 on Feb. 27th and Mar. 20th.
- S Hershams G.P., 11 on Jan. 19th.

187 Buff-breasted Sandpiper

1981 Additional Record.

- S Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 12th (PEB).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee. This is the fourth record of this Nearctic wader for the London Area this century, the first for Surrey and the second individual in 1981. It was last seen to fly off SE and may have been the bird at Bough Beech Res., Kent, on Oct. 13th and 14th.

188 Ruff

The usual numbers wintered at Rainham Marsh but counts were very low in the Staines area early in the year. As usual, March to May records were scarce, for the species spring migration takes place to the east of Britain. Large numbers occurred as usual from July to early September, to be replaced by smaller numbers later in the autumn and into winter.

- E Barking, four on Jan. 10th. Fishers Green, one on Aug. 6th. Netherhall G.P., one on June 12th. Ockendon G.P., one on July 6th. Rainham Marsh, monthly maxima are given in the following table.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
37	10	2	2	2	1	36	37	8	10	10	10

- H Amwell G.P., two on Jan. 9th and one on Sept. 19th. Broxbourne G.P., one on May 13th and two on Aug. 8th. Cole Green, two on Jan. 17th and one on Apr. 25th. Rye Meads S.F., one from Jan. 1st to 5th with two on 2nd.
- M Kempton East Res., two on Aug. 21st, three from 22nd to 29th and two on 30th. King George VI Res., four on July 31st. Staines Moor, three on Jan. 1st. Stanwell Place G.P., one on July 25th. Monthly maxima for Perry Oaks S.F. and Staines Res. are given below.
- | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Perry Oaks S.F. | - | - | - | 3 | - | - | 4 | 6 | 5 | - | 5 | - |
| Staines Res. | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 21 | 12 | 10 | 6 |
- B Wraysbury G.P., singles on Jan. 9th and May 26th.
- K Dartford Marsh, one on Jan. 10th and three on Feb. 28th. Sevenoaks G.P., singles on May 5th and Sept. 25th.
- S Beddington S.F., one on Feb. 14th, up to five from Mar. 31st to Apr. 10th, then singles regularly from July 21st to Aug. 26th with two on July 23rd and three on Aug. 23rd. Hersham G.P., one on Jan. 31st.

189 Jack Snipe

The minimum number of individuals recorded in each month is given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total birds	32	41	17	5	1	5	15	16
Total sites	19	13	8	4	1	4	10	13

The species was a little more widespread than usual. Early in the year it was reported from 31 localities, the last being one at Maple Cross S.F. on Apr. 28th (MCRG). Highest counts were ten at Beddington S.F. on Feb. 14th (NHM), six at Dagenham Chase on Feb. 18th (MKD), five at Hersham S.F. on Jan. 12th (JB), at Stanstead Abbots G.P., on Feb. 14th (LVPG), and at Poyle on Mar. 28th (AVM), the last record suggesting spring passage. The first of the autumn was one at Rainham Marsh on Sept. 25th (MKD) and had been noted at 20 sites by the end of the year. No more than three were present at any locality, but there was evidence of a small passage in November. It is clear from the large number of sites with only one or two records for the year that birds move around much during the winter, as well as in spring and autumn.

190 Snipe

Breeding season records, the largest counts in each county, and two Inner London records are given.

- E Dagenham Chase, 50 on Mar. 5th. Rainham Marsh, 100 on Feb. 10th, and 80 on Aug. 14th which was an unusually high number for that month. Sewardstone, 100 on Dec. 11th. Walthamstow Marsh, 35 on Dec. 13th.
- H Cassiobury Park, 35+ on Jan. 11th. Croxley Moor, one drumming on Mar. 19th. Moor Lane, two pairs (one bird displaying) on Apr. 19th and three displaying on May 18th. Park Street, St. Albans, two pairs present and displaying. Rye House Marsh, 112 on Dec. 31st. Rye Meads S.F., 75 on Feb. 13th. Stanstead Abbots G.P., 50 on Feb. 14th.
- M Crows Nest Farm, Harefield, 53 on Feb. 13th. Frays Meadows, Uxbridge, one drumming on May 9th and 16th. Highway Farm, Harefield, two on Apr. 24th and May 2nd. Kempton Park, 30+ on

Jan. 2nd. Poyle, 49 on Mar. 14th. Staines Res., high numbers on the drained north basin peaked at 324 on Oct. 26th and 350+ on Dec. 30th. Syon Park, 36 on Jan. 26th. Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Sept. 30th.

- B Wraysbury G.P., 20+ on Apr. 2nd.
 K Dartford Marsh, 50 on Feb. 28th. Ruxley G.P., one on May 1st. Sevenoaks G.P., 38 on Jan. 3rd and 31 on Nov. 25th. Swanscombe Marsh, 60 on Jan. 3rd.
 S Beddington S.F., 100 on Mar. 21st, one on May 9th, and up to 70 in November and December. Hersham G.P., 40+ on Jan. 4th. Hersham S.F., c.70 on Jan. 4th. Hogsmill S.F., 45 on Jan. 2nd. Holmethorpe S.P., 48 on Feb. 14th. Inner London: Surrey Docks, one on Apr. 21st.

As usual all records of possible breeding were north of the Thames and no nests or young were seen. The great gatherings at Staines Res. were the largest anywhere in London since January 1969, when there were 400 at Dartford Marsh.

194 Woodcock

All records away from the breeding areas are given in the following table.

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Sightings	24	6	10	2	3	10	8
Total birds	25	7	11	2	3	11	8

The marked cold weather influx of December 1981 lasted into January at half strength. The table suggests some passage in March and shows a clear arrival in November. Inner London records were: Holborn Viaduct, EC1, one on Dec. 2nd (NB); Myddleton Square, EC1, one on Nov. 11th (NB); Regent's Park, two on Jan. 8th and singles flying over on Mar. 26th and Sept. 29th (TD); Whitecross St., EC1, one on Dec. 2nd (NB).

In the breeding season, birds were seen at the following localities (minimum number of birds in brackets).

- E Claybury (1), Epping Forest (1), North Weald (1), Thorndon Park (2), Warley (1).
 H Broxbourne Wood (5), Hilfield Park Res. (1+), Moor Lane (1), Northaw Great Wood (3 pairs), Serge Hill, Watford (1), Symondshyde Wood (1), Wormley Wood (2).
 M Bayhurst Wood (1), Copse Wood, Ruislip (2), Eastcote Common (1), Mad Bess Wood (1), Park Wood, Ruislip (1), Poor's Field, Ruislip (2).
 S Ashtead Common (2+), Epsom Common (3), Headley Heath (1), Reigate Priory (1), Walton Heath (2).

195 Black-tailed Godwit

- E Fishers Green, one flew N on Apr. 30th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, one on July 10th and Aug. 17th (NI), two from Aug. 18th to 20th (KB,NI,IT), and one on Aug. 26th (MKD).

1981 Additional Record

- S Godstone Res. N.R., one on Apr. 12th (AMN).

While the 1982 records were on typical dates, this was a very poor showing in terms of both numbers and distribution.

196 Bar-tailed Godwit

- E Fishers Green, 18 flew S on Aug. 15th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, one on Apr. 24th two on May 1st, four on May 2nd, one on Aug. 18th and one on Sept. 18th and 25th (NI,MKD).
- M Staines Res., on the largely drained north basin, one on Sept. 12th (JHt), one on Sept. 15th (JAH,AVM,PN), one on Sept. 25th (Pct), and 13 on Sept. 29th (GMH,JHt).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 29th (AHH).

An average number of records, with a weak spring passage balanced by two flocks in the autumn. Particularly after the events of 1980, it is surprising that this species failed to put in a strong appearance in late April or early May.

198 Whimbrel

Sightings were between Apr. 22nd and May 20th and between June 29th and Sept. 5th. There were fewer records than in 1981, with none at all from Kent. Autumn migrants are to be expected by mid-July but the June record is unusual; there have only been three other occurrences in that month this century.

- E Chingford, one on Apr. 22nd (NDB). Harlow, one on July 11th (AFW). Netherhall G.P., three on May 15th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, seven on Apr. 24th (MKD), then singles on Apr. 25th, May 8th, July 17th and Aug. 11th (MKD,NI,DS). Thurrock, one on June 29th (JMH).
- H Cheshunt G.P., singles on Apr. 28th and July 17th (LVPG). Hilfield Park Res., one on July 31st (CIB). Stocker's Lake, three on Aug. 5th (RRD).
- M Queen Mary Res., one on Sept. 5th (Pct). Staines Res., three flew NW on May 16th (CWW), and one flew S on Aug. 15th (GAR). West Ruislip, four flew S on Aug. 14th (JE). Inner London: Hyde Park, one flew NW on May 20th (DAB).
- S Beddington S.F., three flew off SW on Aug. 15th (GDJM). Epsom, one flew NE on May 13th (JRBY). Surbiton, two heard at 00.30 hrs. on Aug. 7th (Pct).

199 Curlew

There were fewer sightings than usual. All records are summarized in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sightings	5	-	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	5	-
Total birds	9	-	2	3	2	3	3	9	4	4	10	-

The largest parties were, five flying N at Walthamstow Res. on Aug. 31st (PJH) and five flying S at Barn Elms Res. on Nov 5th (PEB). Spring and autumn movements were poorly defined, but in January some birds clearly appeared as a result of the cold weather, while an unusually late passage occurred in November.

201 Spotted Redshank

There was one spring record. Autumn passage was between July 8th and Oct. 10th with one on Nov. 17th, the latest record since 1973.

- E Rainham Marsh, one on July 8th one or two on nine dates between Aug. 5th and 26th (mo), and one on Sept. 12th. Thurrock, two on Aug. 17th (MKD).

- M Brent Res., one on Sept. 21st (LAB). Kempton East Res., singles on Aug. 4th and 7th (JE,AVM,PN), and between Sept. 2nd and 17th (mo), with two on Sept. 5th (JAH,PN). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Apr. 25th (PN), and one on Aug. 19th (JAS). Queen Mary Res., one flew NNW on Sept. 18th (HWE). Staines Res., singles on 11 dates between Sept. 10th and Oct. 10th (mo), and a late bird on Nov. 17th (AVM).
- S Beddington S.F., one from Aug. 9th to 14th (KDGM *et al.*).

No more than two at a time were seen during the autumn, a rather weak passage in spite of the drained basins at Staines and Kempton East Reservoirs. However, numbers of waders from the Arctic and Subarctic were nationally low in autumn 1982.

202 Redshank

Breeding season records, large counts, and an Inner London record are given.

- E Chingford, one pair nested without success. Fishers Green, one pair nested without success. Ockendon, one pair seen with young. Rainham Marsh, eight pairs bred. Outside the breeding season, there were 54 at Barking on Jan. 10th; monthly maxima at the two main localities are given in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marsh	170	100	70	25	-	40	60	120
West Thurrock	350	260	280	160	8	-	-	210

- H Broxbourne G.P., one pair bred. Cole Green, two pairs nested. Park Street, one pair nested. Otherwise up to five birds were seen at seven localities, mostly in January, March and April.
- M Highway Farm, Harefield, three pairs displaying in April and May, two pairs on June 7th, but no proof of breeding. Perry Oaks S.F., at least two pairs reported to have bred. Queen Mary Res., up to eight in January. Staines Moor and Stanwell Place G.P., a few May to July records but no evidence of breeding. Monthly maxima at the main winter and passage sites are given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Kempton East Res.	-	-	-	-	-	12	4	1	1	-	-	-
Perry Oaks S.F.	-	-	-	10	8	12	3	-	1	-	7	-
Staines Res.	1	1	7	3	1	-	-	-	-	10	13	1

- B Chalfont Park, one on Jan. 17th. Wraysbury G.P., one or two in January and again from April to June.
- K Dartford Marsh, two pairs present in breeding season; 80 on Feb. 28th. Erith Marsh, three pairs holding territory in May and June; 70 on Jan. 26th. River Thames, Purfleet, 90 on Sept. 28th. Swanscombe, 60 on Jan. 3rd.
- S Beddington S.F., six were displaying in late March and up to ten present in April, one pair bred and raised two young. West Molesey, one pair bred, a nest with four eggs was found on May 24th on a grassy, reclaimed rubbish tip where Lapwings were also present. Six other localities had up to four birds outside the breeding season. Inner London: Surrey Docks, one on Feb. 28th.

Wintering numbers were reported to be normal in east London but low in west London. Once again this species was very scarce in September, the month when many other waders pass through.

204 Greenshank

There were three records in winter of singles at Dartford Marsh on Feb. 28th, Rainham Marsh on Dec. 27th and Walthamstow Res. on Dec. 2nd. These were the first winter occurrences for five years. In spring there were singles at 12 localities between Apr. 22nd and June 5th. Numbers in autumn were unexceptional; dates ranged from July 10th to Oct. 28th. All spring records are given, together with a summary of the autumn records in each county.

- E Fishers Green, one on Apr. 30th. King George V Res., one on Apr. 28th. Reported from six sites in autumn, maxima of 25 at Rainham Marsh on Aug. 5th and nine at King George V Res. on Sept. 5th.
- H Amwell G.P., one on June 5th. Cole Green G.P., one on May 16th. Reported from seven sites in autumn, maximum of three at Rye Meads S.F. on July 19th.
- M Singles at Bedfont Quarry on Apr. 25th, Harefield Moor G.P. on May 31st, Perry Oaks S.F. on Apr. 30th, Queen Mary Res. on Apr. 22nd and Stanwell Moor G.P. on May 3rd. In autumn, maxima of 11 at Kempton East Res. on July 17th, nine at Queen Mary G.P. on July 14th and six at Staines Res. on Aug. 27th; up to three were recorded at five other sites.
- B Wraysbury G.P., recorded on four dates in autumn, maximum of two on Aug. 11th.
- K One at Sevenoaks G.P. on May 13th; then only eight records in autumn from four localities with no more than two at one place.
- S Beddington S.F., one on May 9th. Richmond Park, one on May 15th. Reported from four sites in autumn, with a maximum of seven at Beddington S.F. on Aug. 16th.

While the autumn passage showed no clear peaks, the largest numbers probably passed through between mid-July and mid-August, leaving a quiet September. Staines Res. was drained too late to compete with the good total at the much smaller Kempton East Res. which received better attention than usual. The Rainham Marsh total of 25 is better than average there, though not approaching the 53 seen in July 1980.

208 Green Sandpiper

Winter records came from 19 localities at the beginning of the year and from 12 later in the year. They referred to between one and three birds at each site, except for five at Rainham Marsh on Jan. 1st and five at Sevenoaks G.P. on Feb. 27th. Recorded at 16 localities in spring up to May 6th; highest counts were ten at Sevenoaks G.P. on Apr. 12th and 14th, and three at Rainham Marsh on Apr. 17th. An unusually early return migrant or non-breeder was at Sevenoaks G.P. from June 10th to 17th. Further records came from two other localities on June 19th. The highest autumn counts are given below.

- E Rainham Marsh, 41 on July 31st.
- H Cole Green G.P., 11 on Aug. 11th. Maple Cross S.F., seven on July 17th. Rye Meads S.F., seven on Aug. 15th and Oct 3rd.
- M Perry Oaks S.F., six on Oct. 27th. Rammey Marsh, ten on Aug. 28th. Staines Res., five on Oct. 25th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 15 on Aug. 3rd.
- S Beddington S.F., ten on Aug. 20th. Holmethorpe S.P., six on Sept. 18th.

209 Wood Sandpiper

Only two birds were reported in spring, but there was a strong autumn passage. The high count of seven at Kempton East Res. was last matched on Aug. 26th 1970 at Rainham Marsh. Records came from 16 sites, an exceptionally large number.

- E Fishers Green, one from July 31st to Aug. 8th (GJW). Harlow, one on June 28th (AFW). King George V Res., one on July 24th and 25th. Netherhall G.P., one on Aug. 9th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, one on May 31st, then present from July 25th until Aug. 26th with a maximum of five on Aug. 5th (MKD). South Ockendon, one on Aug. 6th and three on Aug. 18th (IT). Thurrock, one or two on four dates between Aug. 8th and 25th (DSB, MKD, PJV).
- H Cole Green G.P., one from Aug. 9th to 11th (HNHS). Rye House Marsh, one on July 17th (LVPG). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Aug. 8th (LVPG).
- M Bedfont Quarry, one on Sept. 8th (RRG). Kempton East Res., present on most dates between July 25th and Aug. 11th with a maximum of seven on Aug. 7th (PN); then up to three between Aug. 18th and Sept. 2nd and one from Sept. 14th to 17th (JHT, AVM, PN *et al.*). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Oct. 3rd (MJW). Rammey Marsh, three on Aug. 7th, one on Aug. 14th and three on Sept. 11th (CCL). Staines Res., singles on many dates between Sept. 15th and Oct. 3rd (mo), with two on Sept. 24th (GMH, JHT).
- S Beddington S.F., one on May 29th and two from Aug. 6th to 11th, one on 12th and one on 28th (GDJM, KDGM *et al.*).

211 Common Sandpiper

Only five birds were noted in January, February and December, fewer than usual. Spring passage lasted from Mar. 19th to June 3rd, with peak counts mostly in the first half of May. At Lonsdale Road Res. in May, a pair apparently tried to nest on a man-made island but gave up after human disturbance. Autumn passage began on June 21st and reached its peak between the end of July and mid-August. Passage numbers seemed about normal, with the important exception of 100 in Essex which is a new highest count for the London Area; the previous best was 86 at Perry Oaks S.F. on Aug. 6th 1978, on almost the same date. Winter records, high counts in spring and autumn, and a summary of Inner London records are given.

- E Lea Valley Reservoirs, 55 on July 31st. Rainham Marsh, one in February, 100 on Aug. 5th, 85 on Aug. 14th in a second wave, and two on Dec. 11th. Walthamstow Res., six on May 2nd and one in December.
- H Hilfield Park Res., five on Aug. 6th. Rye Meads S.F., eight on July 30th and 31st.
- M Kempton East Res., 14 on Aug. 11th. King George VI Res., 25 on July 31st. Perry Oaks S.F., 33 on Aug. 7th. Queen Mary Res., eight on May 3rd and ten on Sept. 5th. Staines Res., ten on Aug. 17th and ten plus on Sept. 11th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on May 10th. Regent's Park, singles on four dates from May 4th to 21st and on Aug. 1st and 2nd.
- B Old Slade N.R., five on Mar. 19th. Queen Mother Res., one on Dec. 1st.
- K River Thames, Crossness, 14 on July 28th. Sevenoaks G.P., five on July 31st and Aug. 19th.

- S Barn Elms Res., nine on May 13th and Aug. 11th. Beddington S.F., 12 on Aug. 7th. Hogsmill S.F., ten on Aug. 14th, and one from Oct. 9th to Dec. 11th. Inner London: Old Kent Rd., SE1, one on May 5th.

213 Turnstone

- E Rainham Marsh, one on July 31st and Aug. 1st (MKD,MS). Thurrock, one on Aug. 21st (PJV).
 M Kempton East Res., one on Aug. 21st (PN). Perry Oaks S.F., one from Aug. 19th to 21st (JAS *et al.*). Queen Mary Res., singles on Aug. 22nd, 29th and 31st (JAH,GDJM,PN). Staines Res., singles on Apr. 27th (JAH,PN), Aug. 7th (PN), Aug. 21st (GCG,PN) and Oct. 4th (GAR). Wood Green Res., one flew N on May 6th (NB).
 B Queen Mother Res., one on Apr. 25th (AR).
 K Swanscombe Marsh, five on Jan. 3rd (BAF), and three on Jan. 10th (LFW,SLW).
 S Barn Elms Res., one on May 3rd (TJL), and one on May 7th and 8th (PEB,RBH,PJS).

While the dates were typical, the total of about 19 individuals was the lowest for some years; a total of just five records in spring.

218 Artic Skua

- E King George V Res., one on Sept. 12th at 14.40 hrs. (CFN). Rainham Marsh, one on May 14th (NI). Walthamstow Res., one flew S at 12.30 hrs. on Sept 12th (RC,JF). All were dark-phase birds.
 M Staines Res., three, two adults and a juvenile, on Sept. 6th (JHT,MJR).
 In the London Area half of all records have been in September and 60% of all records have been at reservoirs.

220 Great Skua

- E Rainham Marsh, one on Sept. 27th (RJCK,NI,IT).
 M Queen Mary Res., an adult on Sept. 6th (MJR). Staines Res., one on Sept. 10th flew SW over King George VI Res. (TJD).

Three records in one year is without precedent and takes the London Area total to ten. Records in the West Midlands tend to peak in September, and are fairly regular there — perhaps we should expect more in London.

222 Mediterranean Gull

- E Harlow, one on Mar. 15th (DC,AHS).
 H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Jan. 1st (JWS,CW).
 M Ruislip Lido, one on Dec. 20th (MJG). Staines Res., one on many dates between Oct. 23rd and Nov. 14th (GMH *et al.*); first-winter birds on Oct. 31st (PG,PN *et al.*) and Dec. 30th (JHT,IGJ *et al.*); and a second-winter bird on Nov. 7th (RBH,AVM *et al.*). Inner London: Regent's Park, a first-winter bird from Feb. 5th to Mar. 14th (SBY,TD,JPW *et al.*), was only the second record for Inner London.
 S Carshalton Pond, one on Jan. 15th (DAC).

All birds are full adults unless specified. The yearly average for the last four years is six, and most sightings are between mid-October and March.

225 Little Gull

Following a record year in 1981 numbers slumped to well below average with a total of 69 bird/days (tabulated below) and involving a minimum of 42 birds; of those aged 75% were immatures. As usual Staines and Queen Mary Reservoirs held the majority of birds (62%) and indeed almost all the birds during September and October.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	0	5	1	4	13	14	19	7	2	2

Spring passage was almost non-existent and all sightings are given: Staines Res., two on Apr. 5th (JAS); Broxbourne G.P., one on Apr. 17th (WGL); Hilfield Park Res., two on Apr. 20th (CIB); and one at Amwell G.P. on May 7th (LVPG).

Mid-summer birds were noted at Amwell G.P. on June 6th and at Rainham Marsh where up to two birds were present intermittently in June and July (MKD,NI). Autumn passage extended from July 31st to Nov. 15th, and the only sightings of more than two birds were as follows: King George V Res., three on July 31st and Aug. 1st; (JF); Staines Res., five on Sept. 14th (JHT) and three on Oct. 24th (LGF,MJW).

Out-of-season birds were seen at Walton Res., on Jan. 22nd (JHT); Staines Res., on Feb. 27th and Dec. 4th (JHT,TJL *et al.*), and a different bird at Queen Mary Res., on Dec. 5th (AVM,PN) was also seen at Staines Res. the same day. Inner London: Regent's Park, a second-summer bird from Aug. 4th to 9th (TD).

228 Black-headed Gull

All counts of 2,000 or over are given as well as peaks noted on the River Thames, a report of a leucistic bird, three ringing recoveries and a report of some deaths probably due to chemical contamination. It is hoped that the organised gull count in February 1983 will give a more accurate indication of numbers roosting in London.

- E Beckton, 2,000 on Dec. 27th. King George V Res., two birds picked up dead in March and December had been ringed in Belgium and Worthing respectively. Rainham Marsh, 3,000 in January, November and December. West Thurrock, 2,000 on Aug. 3rd.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., c.3,000 on Jan. 16th and c. 2,000 on Nov. 15th. Staines Res., 2,500 on Nov. 20th. Inner London: St. James's Park, max. of 575 on Jan. 16th.
- H Hilfield Park Res., 19,000 on Oct. 27th, Nov. 21st and 21,000 on Dec. 19th.
- B Queen Mother Res., a concentration of c.150 corpses was found in late January and reported in the local press as being due to 'escaping de-icer or chlorine gas', one bird carried an East German ring.
- K Swanscombe Marsh, a leucistic bird on Jan. 3rd.
- S Barn Elms Res., c. 22,000 on Dec. 4th. Beddington S.F., c. 2,500 on Jan. 24th. Holmethorpe S.P., 2,000 on Mar. 5th. Island Barn Res., c. 2,500 on Sept. 9th. Thorpe Water Park, 2,000 on Jan. 24th. Inner London: counts on the River Thames at Westminster peaked at 320 in January, and 310 in August and 500 at Waterloo in August.

233 Common Gull

Once again relatively few records were received this year, and spring passage was only monitored at two localities. Selected counts of wintering birds, summaries of spring passage and a ringing recovery are given.

- E King George V Res., one found dead had been ringed in the Netherlands in December 1981.
- H Hilfield Park Res., 700 on Mar. 5th, 1,675 on Nov. 21st and 1,850 on Dec. 19th.
- S Barn Elms Res., and River Thames at Westminster (Inner London), spring passage peaked in late March and early April when c. 100 birds were present at each locality.

234 Lesser Black-backed Gull

Very few counts of any significance were made this year, and no sightings of any darker-mantled birds were reported. Highest counts are given and the first confirmed breeding in the London Area.

- E Walthamstow Res., an all white bird with orange-yellow legs was seen on Jan. 16th (JF).
- H Hilfield Park Res., 960 on Aug. 10th, 2,244 on Sept. 21st, 2,200 on Oct. 17th and 650 on Nov. 21st.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., 750 on Nov. 15th. Inner London: Lord's Cricket Ground, one pair with two young on July 16th but no sign of any young birds on July 31st. Although breeding seemed possible in the late 1960s, and was actually suspected in 1969, this is the first time that breeding has been verified.

235 Herring Gull

No counts of over 500 were received this year. Two pairs bred in Inner London, one rearing three young at the Lord's Cricket Ground and a second pair rearing two young in Whitehall. This species has now bred, or attempted to breed, in every year since 1961.

Two recent notes in *British Birds* 76:191-4 have thrown some light on the origin of yellow-legged birds. Evidence strongly suggests that many of these birds in southern Britain are of the Mediterranean subspecies *L.a. michahellis* (and possibly *L.a. cachinnans*). The general pattern is for birds to appear in early autumn and winter following a N or NW post-breeding dispersal. More critical observations and submitted descriptions might help to clarify the situation within our Area.

Yellow-legged birds were recorded as follows, all are singles unless otherwise stated: Barn Elms Res., three on Dec. 4th; Harefield Moor G.P., on Sept. 18th; Rainham Marsh, two on Mar. 13th; River Thames at Barnes on Aug. 16th (showing characters of *L.a. michahellis*) and at Westminster on 27 dates between June and December; St. James's Park, one present throughout and a West Thurrock on July 25th, Aug. 18th and Sept. 28th.

1981 Additional Note.

The yellow-legged bird at Kew on Feb. 12th showed characters of *L.a. michahellis*.

237 Glaucous Gull

- K Sevenoaks G.P., two on Jan. 10th (AHH), one of which was present in December 1981.

238 Great Black-backed Gull

The poorest counts received for many years, only three counts of 100 or above were submitted and those are given below. The 1983 gull roost census should clarify their present status.

- K Sevenoaks G.P., 150 on Jan. 10th.
- S Holmethorpe S.P., c.200 on Mar. 5th. Long Ditton, c.100 in January.

240 Kittiwake

A good year with an approximate total of 20 records (32 birds), of which 70% were in spring. Six birds were picked up dead. The average number of records/birds per year from 1970 to 1979 was 6.9 (20.1), whereas the average in the last three years (1980-82) has been 16.1 (30); it remains to be seen whether this increase will be maintained during the rest of the decade. All records are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 18th was found dead the following day (AJG).
- H Cheshunt G.P, an immature on Jan. 10th (GJW). Hilfield Park Res., an adult and an immature on Apr 13th to 14th (CIB), both birds were later found dead.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., an immature on Apr. 16th (JAH,PN). Queen Mary Res., an adult on Mar. 4th (GAR), a first-winter bird found dead on Mar. 21st (PCT), four adults on May 27th (MJR), and a juvenile from Aug. 7th to 11th (HJF,LGF *et al.*) was subsequently found dead. Staines Res., an adult on Mar. 13th (TG), and single adults on ten dates between Apr. 13th and May 3rd probably involved four different birds (HB,PN *et al.*); at least nine, four adults and five immatures, passed W on Nov. 13th (RBH,TJL *et al.*), and an immature on Dec. 18th (AVM).
- B Queen Mother Res., an adult on Mar. 13th (AW) was presumably the bird from Staines Res.
- S Barn Elms Res., a single adult seen every day from Apr. 13th to 21st, two on Apr. 15th and three on Apr. 17th, one of which was later found dead (RBH,TJL). Walton Res., an adult on Apr. 18th (CO) was in a very weak condition.

1980 Correction

- M The record for Inner London on Apr. 2nd should be deleted and replaced under Surrey and should read; Inner London: River Thames, Westminster, one, an adult, flew downstream on Apr. 24th (PJS).

243 Caspian Tern

- M Staines Res., an adult flew over calling on Aug. 11th and departed to the SW over the adjacent King George VI Res. (AVM,PN).
Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee. This is the fourth record in the London Area and the second successive one at this locality.

245 Sandwich Tern

Another above-average showing, although clearly some duplication of sightings occurred in the Staines area during the autumn. Large flocks are not rare, but most occur in September. All records are given.

- E King George V Res., one on Apr. 22nd (GJW), and Sept. 18th (CFH). Netherhall G.P., five on Sept. 25th (GJW).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on May 15th (HPM).

- M Bedfont Quarry, two on Sept. 11th (RRG). Queen Mary Res., one on Aug. 28th (AVM,PN) and three on Sept. 25th (HRG). Staines Res., singles on Aug. 27th and 28th (JAH,PN,PAW) two on Sept. 11th, three on Sept. 12th, two on Sept. 18th, Sept. 22nd and Sept. 24th, five on Sept. 25th, four on Sept. 29th and six on Oct. 1st (JHT,LGF,BAR,JAS *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., three on Sept. 12th (RRG).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on June 1st and 20 on Sept. 18th (AHH).
- S Teddington Lock, one on Sept. 23rd (JHT).

247 Common Tern

Breeding records are given. Passage records are summarized under 247/8. In 1982 there were at least 44 nesting pairs.

- H Rye Meads S.F., at least 35 pairs bred, although breeding success is not known.
- M King George VI Res., five pairs reared at least seven young. Queen Mary Res., the removal of the traditional nesting site prevented breeding this year.
- B Wraysbury G.P., three pairs reared at least six young, and another pair summered. At a second site one pair reared three young.

247/8 Common/Arctic Tern

Passage records of Common Terns are summarized here together with unspecified observations of Common/Arctic Terns.

The first sighting was on Apr. 4th when two were at the Brent Res., and three at Rye Meads S.F. Spring passage was exceptionally low, and the peak count was 40 at Swanscombe on May 2nd; three sightings of 20 in the Lea Valley in late April and early May probably relate to local breeding birds. Apart from these no other counts in spring reached double figures.

Totals at West Thurrock were consistently above 30 throughout most of the autumn, but often did not reflect peaks elsewhere. A very marked movement (mainly in the SW) involving over 400 birds was noted on Aug. 15th, and the sites and totals were as follows: Barn Elms Res. 160+, Nazeing G.P. 70, West Thurrock 40, Heathrow Airport 40, Queen Mary Res., 32, Beddington S.F., 27, Homethorpe S.P., 23 and Kempton East Res., 22 — many birds were seen to fly in a W or SW direction. Further movements were noted between Aug. 29th and Sept. 1st with maxima of 120 at West Thurrock, 61 at Barn Elms Res., and 59 at Queen Mary Res. A remarkable count of 184 at Barn Elms Res. on Sept. 5th coincided with 72 at Staines Res. and 40 at Queen Mary Res. Apart from 230 at West Thurrock on Sept. 28th, passage during September was relatively quiet. There were seven October sightings, the last being at the Brent Res. on Oct. 16th.

Inner London: Hyde Park, two flew over on Aug. 17th (DAB). River Thames, Waterloo, two on Oct. 7th. Westminster, two on Aug. 26th, 13 on Sept. 6th and seven on Sept. 21st (SJG,PJS).

248 Arctic Tern

A poor year in comparison with 1981, which was exceptional, but nevertheless impressive with another huge-but rather isolated-spring count, and also a very late autumn record. All records are given.

- E King George V Res., 17 on Apr. 24th and 13 on Apr. 27th (JF,PJV). West Thurrock, two on Aug. 17th, one on Aug. 19th and two on Sept. 1st (KB,MKD).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Apr. 26th (HNHS). Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 18th and May 1st, and a juvenile on Sept. 6th (CIB,HNHS).
- M Staines Res., three on Apr. 19th, 12 on Apr. 24th, 22 on Apr. 27th, 140 on Apr. 29th, two on Apr. 30th and May 3rd (JAH,AVM,PN). Queen Mary Res., a juvenile on Aug. 18th and from Sept. 6th to 8th (AVM,MJR), and an adult on Aug. 30th (MJW).
- B Wraysbury G.P., two on May 1st (CJH,JAH).
- S Barn Elms Res., a juvenile on Aug. 27th, and adults on Sept. 2nd (one) and Sept. 5th (three), and a further juvenile on Sept. 6th (RBH,WR). Hersham G.P., a juvenile on Oct. 30th and 31st, and again on Nov. 7th (JB,SDBWS *et al.*).

251 Little Tern

Only one year in the last twenty (1967) has had fewer birds than this year. All records are given.

- E King George V Res., one on May 23rd (PJV). Rainham, one on Sept. 18th (AS).
- H Broxbourne G.P., one on July 6th (GJW). Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 20th (CIB).
- M Staines Res., one from Sept. 11th to 13th (GMH,JHT,TJL).
- S River Thames at Kew, one flying upriver on Aug. 26th (RBH).

253 Black Tern

An unexceptional year, with few large counts. Sightings at 17 localities totalled approximately 219 birds. Apart from one at Staines Res. (JAS) and two at Old Slade N.R. (BBC) on Apr. 23rd spring passage took place between May 6th and 31st and eight localities had approximately 28 birds. Most were seen between May 6th and 14th, and the largest flock was eight at King George V Res. on May 12th (CFN), no other sightings involved more than four birds.

There were two mid-summer records: three at Harefield Moor G.P. on July 3rd (JE,PN) and ten at Queen Mary Res. on July 9th (MJR); these apart the autumn passage extended from July 25th to Nov. 5th and involved a minimum of 191 birds at 13 localities. All counts over ten are given. West Thurrock had its highest totals in the first half of August with ten on the 8th and 11th, 14 on the 15th, 40 on the 17th and 24 on the 19th (MKD,PJV *et al.*). On Aug. 30th Barn Elms Res. held at least 31 birds (WR), although no passage was reported elsewhere: there was a brief movement between Sept. 10th to 12th when 12 were at Staines Res. (JAH,PN) and 21 at Barn Elms Res. (PJS) but the only count of more than seven after this was at West Thurrock with 14 on Sept. 28th (PJS). Birds were present in SW Middlesex on most days during September and up to Oct. 10th, but totals rarely exceeded five. There were two late records, one at Holmethorpe S.P. on Oct. 26th (SDBWS), and one at Staines Res. on Oct. 13th which remained to the exceptionally late date of Nov. 5th (JAS *et al.*).

254 White-winged Black Tern

E West Thurrock, an immature on Aug. 7th (CPG,RHn).

Up to 1978 nearly 90% of all records were in SW Middlesex (61% at Queen Mary Reservoir alone) since then however all records have been at this locality. Accepted by *British Birds Rarities Committee* it is the 25th record for the London Area this century.

255 Guillemot

E Chingford, one found on a roadside verge on Dec. 3rd, died the following day (IB).

S River Thames adjacent to Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 16th and 17th, on the latter date it was also seen at Wandsworth Bridge (DJB,RBH *et al.*).

Although the rarest auk in London (14 records this century) it has during the last fifteen years become the commonest with eight records since 1967.

255/7 Auk sp

K River Thames, Woolwich Arsenal, one on Dec. 1st (PJS).

261 Puffin**1978 Additional Record**

B Queen Mother Res., an immature on Aug. 21st unable to fly, was found dead two days later (Thames Water Authority *per* REY).

There have been three times as many records of Puffin than of any other species of auk this century, however, over the last twenty years there have only been six records making it the rarest during this period; sadly this almost certainly reflects their decline around our coasts.

264 Stock Dove

Over 80 pairs were recorded during the breeding seasons from at least 30 localities. Details of these, plus large flocks, are given below.

E Up to six pairs recorded from: Berwick Ponds, Epping Forest, Hainault, Havering, Navestock, North Romford, Ockendon, and Rainham Marsh. No flock exceeded 100 birds.

H Reported in the breeding season from Nyn Park, Northaw, Theobalds Park, Whippenhall Wood. Maximum flock count was 85 at Panshanger on Nov. 19th.

M Bred or probably bred at Bushy Park, Darland's Lake, Hampton Court Park, Harefield Moor, Ken Wood, Mill Hill, Kempton Park. Up to 21 pairs at Osterley Park, where yearly maxima was 174 on Mar. 8th and 100 on Mar. 21st. Inner London: Regent's Park, one pair. Kensington Gardens, two pairs.

K Bromley, Dartford Marsh, Foots Cray Meadows, Lullingstone.

S Reported from: Barn Elms, Bookham Common, Caterham, Ravensbury Park, Richmond Park, Wimbledon Common.

265 Woodpigeon

With the exception of 800 flying SW at Rye Meads on Nov. 7th, and 1,000 at Watford on Dec. 26th, the largest flocks reported came during the severe weather at the beginning of the year. By far the

largest movement was at Darenth, where 1,000 moved west on Jan. 10th, and a constant westerly movement of 3,000 occurred during the morning of Jan. 17th. Inner London: Several pairs bred in St. James's Park, was the only record.

266 Collared Dove

Comments on changes in the breeding population were received from several areas. A slight decrease was reported from the Barking and Ilford areas of Essex, while at Cassiobury Park in Herts. it is no longer resident and appears scarcer than in recent years. However an increase was reported in the Harrow area and a 30% increase in the Tadworth-Banstead area of Surrey. In Inner London, singles were present in Hyde Park on several dates in the spring, while one pair possibly bred in Regent's Park. The largest flocks reported were from Serge Hill, 120 on Dec. 26th and Bulphan, 200 on Oct. 10th.

267 Turtle Dove

One in Regent's Park on Apr. 5th was the first of the year and was followed by other April birds at Walton Heath on the 12th. High Elms on the 20th, Harefield Place G.P. on the 22nd and Amwell G.P., on the 25th. A general arrival occurred during the first two weeks of May, but no large movements or flocks were reported. The general impression is that it was rather uncommon this year, with decreases being reported from several areas, including parts of Essex, the Caterham area and Bookham Common in Surrey and the High Elms area of Kent. This is borne out in two comparative studies of territories at Bookham Common and Hainault Forest during the last five breeding seasons:

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Bookham Common (S)	10	11	9	4	4
Hainault Forest (E)	5	5	4	4	4

Apart from the Inner London record above, the birds were recorded in Regent's Park on 20 occasions in the spring, usually singles passing over and are from Oct. 6th to the 15th, this being by far the latest bird recorded during the year.

269 Ring-necked Parakeet

Recorded from all counties during the year, although none from Inner London, but it can only be a matter of time before the species is reported from there. Its strongholds appear to be in parts of Middlesex, and south of the River Thames in Surrey and Kent. Undoubtedly under-recorded from Herts. and Essex where breeding colonies existed in at least two areas in the mid 1970s. All records are given, but those at the main sites are summarized.

- E Chingford, one on July 2nd (GBS). Ilford, one on Feb. 16th (CG). Walthamstow Res., singles on Apr. 24th, July 27th (JF,PJH), during November (JT *et al.*) and on Dec. 3rd (PJH).
- H Maple Cross S.F., one on June 19th (RDNHS). West Hyde one on June 19th (RDNHS).
- M Osterley Park, probably bred, but no young seen (DGH). Queen Mary Res., maximum count of ten on Oct. 30th, probably breeding in the area of Shepperton Studios, much commoner than previously (HRG). Chiswick House, resident and breeding in grounds (DKJW). Hampstead Cemetery, one on Mar. 20th (RW). Marsh Lane, Mill

Hill, one on June 10th (WAH). Staines, one during September and October feeding on sunflower seeds (SG). Ravenscourt Park, five roosting on Dec. 19th (TJL). Chiswick Park, four flew NE on Dec. 28th (TJL). Shepperton, four on Mar. 28th, two on Oct 9th and one on Oct. 19th (HWE).

- B Wryasbury G.P., two on Feb. 13th and 14th, one on Feb. 28th (LGF, JAH, CJH) and a pair feeding on peanuts in a garden during December (IGJ), up to ten birds have apparently been present in the area for the last ten years roosting on Runnymede Island.
- K Beckenham, up to 12 flying to roost during the year. Bromley Court Hotel, eight to nine flying to roost during the year (JDH). Bickley, one on Jan. 1st (RT). Foots Cray Meadows, up to four during the year (SJG.) Park Langley, present during the year (JDH). Pratts Bottom, one on Sept. 5th (TRS). Elmstead Woods, up to 24 flying to roost during the year (WTB). The Tarn, Eltham, pair at nest hole in tree on Apr. 11th (JW-C). West Wickham, one on Feb. 15th (PJS).
- S Beddington Park, present during the year (DAC, KDGM). Betchworth Golf Course, three on Oct. 28th (SJA). Fetcham, singles on Oct. 17th, 18th and Nov. 28th (DSC, CCH). Hersham S.F., two on Feb. 14th and on Dec. 17th (PCT, WRI). Kew, two on Apr. 22nd (RBH), Kew Gardens, up to eight from January to November (RBH *et al.*). Weybridge, up to four in November (GHMP). High Broom Wood, one on Jan. 31st (JCW).

271 Cuckoo

The first arrivals were singles at Sevenoaks G.P., on Apr. 4th and Curtismill Green on Apr. 7th (AHH, MKD) followed by a general arrival during the second week of April, a little earlier than usual. Reported during the breeding season from well over 40 localities an increase on 1981, the majority in Essex and Surrey. An increase was reported from the Colne Valley (HB), but a rather poor year in the Caterham area, with none after May 30th (SJH). The highest numbers of calling birds again came from Essex; with up to five males and three females in the Epping and Hainault areas, and six males and three females in the North Weald area (MKD, JF). Young birds were reported from several areas from July onwards including young being fed by Reed Warblers at both Stocker's Lake and Harefield Place G.P. and by Dunnocks at Ashtead Common (TRD, HNHS, PN, MJW). Three birds were reported during September, with the last at Walthamstow Res., on the 18th (TG). Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on May 7th (DAB). Regent's Park, singles on May 4th, June 17th and 18th, and Aug. 3rd (TD, SBY, DAB).

274 Barn Owl

The status of this species still gives cause for concern with less than 20 records received including only two pairs, neither of which was proved to breed. However, singles were reported in three localities in Herts. and Essex during the breeding season, but no reports at all were received from Middlesex, Bucks. or Surrey indicating that south of the River Thames it is now quite rare. All records are given.

- E Dagenham, one in November (CWP). Hackney, one on Jan. 4th was hit by a car (NB). North Romford, one in November (*per* MKD). Rainham Marsh, one or two birds in March hunting at dusk (MKD, NI). Roydon, one in March (GJW). Thorndon Park, one on June 6th (RL). Walthamstow Res., one on Jan. 31st (IDG).

- H Broxbourne G.P., one on Oct. 30th (HNHS,CCL). Rickmansworth, singles on Jan. 16th (*per* HB) and Jan. 28th (HB). Rye Meads, singles on Jan. 16th and 24th and Mar. 30th (RMRG). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one from Mar. 21st stayed into April (CCL,GJW,JF). South Mimms, one on Jan. 31st (HNHS).
- K Dartford Marsh and Littlebrook, pairs reported but breeding not proved (DRG).

279 Little Owl

Reported during the year from nearly 60 localities, an increase on recent years. At least eight pairs bred successfully out of a total of 23 pairs reported, the majority of which were north of the Thames but very under-reported in Surrey. There were no reported changes in status. There were no Inner London records. Pairs in the breeding season are given in the table below:

Essex	Herts.	Middx.	Bucks.	Kent	Surrey
13	2	4	0	3	1

280 Tawny Owl

A total of at least 55 pairs reported, of which 18 bred. This represents a substantial increase over previous years. Present in over 50 additional localities during the year, indicating quite a healthy population.

- E Bred or probably bred at: Hainault, Havering, Loughton, Nazeing, North Weald, Romford, Thorndon Park.
- H Breeding records from: Rickmansworth, Rye Meads, Theobalds Park.
- M Up to seven pairs reported from: Alexandra Park, East Finchley, Darland's Lake, Fulham, Hillingdon, Islington, RAF Uxbridge, and Osterley Park. Inner London: Bishop's Park Road, SW6, one pair nested in a plane tree, one young died, the second was hand reared and released in Barnes in September. Canonbury Place, N1, one pair bred. Kensington Gardens, one pair present. Regent's Park, at least three pairs present.
- K Bred or probably bred at: Beckenham, Eltham, High Elms, Sundridge Park, Bromley.
- S Present in the breeding season at: Caterham, Epsom, Cannon Hill Common, Lonsdale Road Res., Kew Gardens, Kingston and Surbiton area, Wimbledon Common.

281 Long-eared Owl

At least eight birds overwintered in two main roosts in Essex and Kent during the severe weather at the beginning of 1982. The closing months of the year saw a fall to more meagre numbers with only three birds recorded and no regular roost. All records are given.

- E Locality A, three roosting in January and up to four in February and March. Locality B, only one remained at this roost in January (up to six in December 1981) (KB,MKD *et al.*). Walthamstow Res. area, one roosting on the edge of River Lea from Nov. 19th to 21st (PF,PJH,GJW *et al.*).
- H Rye Meads S.F., one on Oct. 31st (RMRG).
- K Dartford Marsh, three or four in January and February two of which were later reported to have been shot (DRG).
- S Brooklands, Weybridge, one from Nov. 18th to 23rd (CO).

282 Short-eared Owl

At least 23 individuals still remained in January from the influx at the end of 1981 and up to 30 birds were present at some time during the first five months of the year. Birds lingered well into May at Rainham Marsh and was only absent for four months at that site with the first autumn birds back by mid-September. A large influx, mainly concentrated in Essex, occurred in late October and November when over 40 birds were present. Many of these moved on and dispersed throughout the London Area but the total for the autumn as a whole probably reached some 70 individuals quite unrelated to any hard weather movements. The majority of these birds were along the Rivers Thames and Lea in Essex, Middx. and Herts., involving some duplication at a few localities. Monthly maxima and summarized records are given.

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
23	12	13	6	1	1	41	40	56

- E Present from January to May at the following localities; Berwick Ponds, max. of eight in January; Rainham Marsh, max. of five in March with the last on May 9th (MKD,JW); Walthamstow Res., singles in January and on Mar. 29th and Apr. 9th (RF,CA,PF). The first autumn bird was seen at Rainham Marsh on Sept. 18th and followed by singles on Sept. 29th and from early October onwards with at least 15 on Oct. 30th, up to ten were present in November and six until the end of the year (NI,JMH,MKD,DSB *et al.*). Walthamstow Res., present from Oct. 16th to the end of the year, with a maximum of eight on Dec. 11th (PJH,PF,JF). Up to five birds were at eight other sites in the months from October to December (mo).
- H Cheshunt G.P., singles on Jan. 3rd, Oct. 27th and Nov. 14th and up to five in December (RL). In addition there were up to two birds at three sites between January and Mar. 20th and up to three from October to December at six sites (CCK,CIB,HNHS,RMRG).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one from Jan. 30th to Feb. 13th and up to two at six other localities from January to Apr. 3rd (JAS,LAB,HWE). Tottenham Marsh, up to four in December and up to two at four sites from Oct. 15th to the end of the year (JF,ICJ,JH). Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Oct. 5th was the first record for the park (JPW,TD).
- B Old Slade N.R., one on Dec. 28th (BBC).
- K Dartford Marsh, one from January to March and another found shot, and one on Dec. 18th (DRG). Elmers End S.F., one on Apr. 21st (BB). Chipstead Lake, one on Oct. 24th (KG).
- S Beddington S.F., two from Oct. 18th and three from Oct. 31st to Nov. 27th and single birds at three other sites from Oct. 24th to December (SJA,DJB,DHH,WRI *et al.*).

284 Nightjar

At least nine churring birds were present, with a welcome return of two in Surrey after two years absence. One pair bred in Essex, while another male was present at a traditional site in Kent. All records are given.

- E Ongar area, present in the area from May 25th two or three churring and displaying in late May and June (MKD,JMH) and at least one pair bred (EBWPS).

- H Broxbourne Wood, one on June 12th, and two churring in July and August (TRD,PAB,JF). Symondshyde Great Wood, two males and a female on June 13th (HNHS).
- K Joyden's Wood, Bexley, a male ringed on June 5th was present for at least two weeks after this date (DRG).
- S Headley Heath, one churring on May 29th and two churring in mid-June (*per* RRG).

289 Swift

Singles at King George V Res. and Barn Elms Res. on Apr. 24th, were the first arrivals, although most areas had their first birds within the next few days. A sizeable movement took place in the first two weeks of May, with concentrations of 2,000 at King George V Res. on May 8th, 1,000 at Staines Res. increasing to 2,000 on the 13th. Mid-summer feeding flocks included c. 1,000 at Staines Res. on June 13th and the same number at Wraysbury Res. on the same date.

More Inner London breeding records were reported this year. Addison Gardens, W14 two pairs bred; Harley Road, NW3, five entering holes under eaves in July; Lambrook Terrace, SW6, one pair bred, the site being used for the last six years. Otherwise noted feeding over Central London on many dates, with maxima of 200 over Kensington Gardens on May 24th and the same number over the River Thames at Lambeth on June 22nd.

Late July to mid-August saw the main autumn departure under way. Most birds had departed by the last week of August but there were lingering during the first two weeks of September. The last reported were two at Staines Res. and one at Bexley on Oct. 3rd.

291 Alpine Swift

- E Ongar, one on June 29th (MU).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the tenth record for the London Area this century and the fourth in the last five years. All of the recent records have been in June or July.

293 Kingfisher

About 23 pairs summered in the area, a decrease of 18% on 1981 and was probably because of the severe weather in the first few weeks of the year. The species was very scarce in some areas until the autumn, when it became more widespread. All definite and probable breeding records are given, together with Inner London records.

- E Pairs bred at Fishers Green, Netherhall G.P., Waltham Abbey, Walthamstow Res., Wanstead.
- H Bred or probably bred at Bury Lake, Croxley Hall G.P., Loudwater, and two pairs bred at Stocker's Lake.
- M Breeding records came from Harefield Moor G.P., and Springwell Lake. Possibly bred at Queen Mary G.P., where over 15 birds were ringed during the year. Inner London; Regent's Park, one on Feb. 15th.
- B Two pairs present at Wraysbury G.P.
- K Bred or probably bred at Foots Cray Meadows, Littlebrook G.P., Park Langley, Ruxley G.P., Sevenoaks G.P.
- S Breeding season records from Holmethorpe S.P., Kew Gardens (one pair), Wrythebrook and near Littleworth Common (one pair).

297 Hoopoe

H Potters Bar, one from May 20th to 22nd (*per* HNHS).

M Hounslow, one on Apr. 6th and 7th (CWRS).

Below the usual showing, the average for the last decade being about three a year.

298 Wryneck

H Stanstead Abbots, one on May 8th (GJW *et al.*).

K Chislehurst, one on Oct. 4th (RSW).

With only two records, of a presumed migrant in spring and a passage bird in autumn, this year's total appears very meagre compared with last year's avalanche of at least 17 birds.

300 Green Woodpecker

Reported during the breeding season from over 80 localities, twice the number of previous year's records. It is locally common in some well wooded areas with eight pairs at Hainault, at least six pairs in Epping Forest and five pairs on Wimbledon Common and undoubtedly moving into suburban areas with suitable habitat. One pair gave Osterley Park its first confirmed breeding record since 1962. Other pairs bred successfully at Hampstead Heath and there were at least four pairs in Richmond Park and two pairs in Hampton Court Park. One in Regent's Park on June 14th was the first Inner London record for five years.

302 Great Spotted Woodpecker

As in previous years reported from over 45 localities during the breeding season with no significant change in status detected. However, there was a slight decrease at Hainault, eight pairs in 1982 from ten in 1981 and at Bookham Common no territories could be found in 96 acres of scrub where there was one pair in 1981. During the severe weather in January birds were noted on a bird feeder in Islington. Inner London: Holland Park, present during the breeding season. Hyde Park, one on Oct. 27th. Kensal Green Cemetery, one on Aug. 6th. Regent's Park, present throughout the year.

303 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

Reported from at least 46 localities during the breeding season (see distribution table below), but no evidence of any change of status or distribution, apart from Surrey where there were fewer sightings than usual in the Caterham area. At Bookham Common, there were again no territories in either study area (last bred there in 1980) but elsewhere it appears to be thinly distributed in suitable habitat. Inner London: Holland Park, present during breeding season, Regent's Park, one pair recorded until April, then only singles.

- Localities during the breeding season.

			Inner			
Essex	Herts.	Middx.	London	Bucks.	Kent	Surrey
7+	9	11	2	1	3	13

311 Skylark

The large flocks recorded during the last few months of 1981 were still much in evidence during early 1982 as the cold spell persisted. At Bromley Common there were 180 on Jan. 3rd, over 400 at Beddington S.F. on the 9th, the same day that 250 flew south in one hour at Amwell. A flock of 300 was present along the River Thames at Barking on Jan. 10th and over 200 at the nearby Rainham Marsh for most of January and February. In addition there were three other flocks of over 100 birds at several other localities. Numbers dropped towards the end of the month and February records show a return to more normal levels. Spring and summer numbers were poorly reported and the maxima were 100+ at Epsom Downs on Mar. 28th and c. 70 at Chelsfield (K) on July 3rd. Reported from only five areas as definitely breeding with a maximum of five pairs on Wimbledon Common. Numbers at the close of the year were low in contrast to December 1981 with no large flocks or movements apart from 110 at Maple Cross S.F. on Dec. 28th. Inner London: Surrey Docks, 20 on Feb. 28th and five to ten pairs bred. Regent's Park, up to three from January to April and during October.

313 Sand Martin

The first arrivals were noted from mid-March onwards, with singles at Cheshunt G.P. on Mar. 13th, Regent's Park and Rainham on the 20th and Sevenoaks G.P. on the 21st. A widespread arrival occurred in the last week of March and the first two weeks of April. Staines Res. recorded the largest spring flocks of 200 on Apr. 13th and 21st, increasing to 300 on the 24th.

Return passage began in late July, and was well underway by mid-August. Several large flocks were a feature of this period, and included 1,000 at Rainham Marsh in mid-August, 1,300 resting on the concrete taxiway in a quiet area of London Airport on July 28th (perhaps looking for a quick way home!), and up to 1,000 at Staines Res. in late August. Flocks of up to 200 continued into October but most birds had left by the end of the month. By far the latest bird was one at Staines Res. on Nov. 7th.

There was a welcome increase in the number of breeding records from all counties, details given below, together with those records from Inner London.

- E Fishers Green, 25 pairs. Lea Valley Reservoirs, 30+ pairs in drain-holes. Netherhall G.P., 50 pairs. Roydon, 30 pairs.
- H Batchworth Lake, four pairs adjacent to Grand Union Canal. Broxbournebury, 20 nests. Bushey, 20 nests. Hatfield, Cooper's Green, 128 occupied nests. Rye Meads S.F., one pair bred, the first record from this site.
- M Cranford G.P., a colony of 30 to 50 pairs. Harlington G.P., 20 nest holes. Harefield, 10 nests in drainage pipes along Grand Union Canal. Inner London: Small numbers on several dates from Mar. 20th to Sept. 2nd mainly at Regent's Park, also occasionally in Hyde Park.
- B Wraysbury G.P., six pairs bred.
- K Littlebrook G.P., two or three pairs possibly bred. Sevenoaks G.P., 45 nest holes, Sevenoaks Sand Quarry, several pairs bred.
- S Buckland S.P., 40 pairs. Godstone Res. N.R., 50 pairs. Homethorpe S.P., 150 nests at four sites. Thorpe Water Park, 70 pairs.

314 Swallow

Many areas recorded the first birds during the first week of April, from the 4th onwards. Spring passage was largely uneventful, with no large flocks reported apart from 700 moving over Epsom Downs in one and a half hours on Apr. 18th. Few reports of any changes in status were received, although numbers were reported to be much lower than usual in the Caterham area. Return passage began in early September, and continued until late October. Several large flocks were reported at this time, including 500 at Rye Meads on Sept. 11th, 500+ SW at Staines Moor on Oct. 3rd, 500 moving through and 100 roosting at Dartford on Sept. 5th, and 350+ SW in about one hour at Beckenham on Sept. 21st. The last bird was one on Nov. 28th at Rye Meads S.F.

Inner London: A pair were present at Bankside Power Station during early June but not subsequently; Regent's Park, small numbers seen most days, with maxima of 500+ on Sept. 30th and 200+ on Oct. 1st, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, up to four during the spring.

315 Red-rumped Swallow

H Hilfield Park Res., one on May 18th (CIB).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee, the fifth record for the London Area this century, slightly later than the national average for spring records.

316 House Martin

The first birds were three at Maple Cross S.F. on Mar. 29th and as with Swallow most areas had their first birds within a few days of this date. Apart from the 500+ in two hours at Banstead Heath on Apr. 16th the main movement occurred in May with 300 at Troy Mill G.P. on the 3rd and 250 at Staines Res. the next day. There were 'hundreds' at Barn Elms Res. on the 6th and two other areas reported up to 150 at that time then small numbers until a late peak of 1,200 at Mill Green, Hatfield on the 27th. Return passage started in mid-August with two flocks of over 100 birds and was a feature of late September and early October. At Staines Res., 1,000 remained from Sept. 26th to Oct. 3rd, when a large SW movement occurred, numbers remained high until mid-month, and included a leucistic bird on the 17th. Peak counts elsewhere included 700+ SW at Beckenham in one hour on Sept. 21st (see also Swallow), 450+ S at Bromley Common on Sept. 26th, and smaller movements at many other sites through to early October. There were several lingering birds in early November, four remained at Theobalds Park until Nov. 30th and one until Dec. 1st.

Inner London: There was a very welcome and substantial increase in the number of Inner London breeding records this year, at least 120 pairs were present. All records are given, and observers are encouraged to continue submitting such records so that the Inner London breeding population can be monitored in the future. Alderville Road SW6, two pairs bred. Clancarty Road, SW6, two pairs bred. Wingrave Road, W6, three pairs bred. Cassland Road, E9, 11 nests. Ovington Road two pairs. Harbord Street, Fulham, seven nests. Old Bethnal Green Road, E2, nesting colony on Raines

Lower School. Loudoun Road, NW8, one nest. Beaumont Avenue W14, 11 nests. Challoner Street, W14, three nests. Comeragh Road, at least 27 nests (30 in 1980). Barton Road W14, three nests. Barons Court Road, W14, two nests. Hyde Park; Albert Gate site, at least 36 nests, an increase over 13 in 1979, 21 in 1980 and 19 in 1981. Argentine Embassy, Grosvenor Crescent, and Belgrave Square, two new colonies. Hollybush Gardens E2, nesting colony on Holybush House. Elsworthy Road area of St. Johns Wood, at least 12 nests. Willow Bridge Road, N1, one pair. Kenning Street, SE16, breeding on pre-war blocks of flats.

320 Tree Pipit

The first spring arrival was at Sevenoaks G.P. on March 21st, then one at Headley Heath on April 10th was followed by several others during the next few days. At least 50 pairs were present in the breeding season at 22 sites. The last record was of one at Rainham Marsh on Oct. 9th. Breeding distribution and the only Inner London record is given.

- E Bedfords Park, two pairs. Dagnam Park, five pairs. Hainault Forest, seven pairs. Havering, three pairs. North Weald, eight pairs. Thorndon Park, four pairs. Epping forest, at least 12 singing males. Harlow Woods, two singing males. Hartswood, two singing males. Warley, one singing male.
- H Bishops wood, three singing males, Cowheath Wood, four singing males. West Essendon, at least one singing male. Clearly more information is required as several sites went unrecorded.
- M Singles in April and May at Alexandra Park and Ruislip. Inner London: Regent's Park, one on April 13th (TD).
- K Pairs seen at Bromley Common and Joyden's Wood, but the outcome is not known. Single birds at Hoblingwell Wood, Chelsfield and High Elms may have been from breeding pairs.
- S Ashted Common, one singing male. Epsom Common, two singing males. Farleigh, three singing males. Wimbledon Common, five pairs. Banstead and Walton Heaths, nine birds seen, also present at Headley Heath and Mitcham Common in the breeding season.

322 Meadow Pipit

There were breeding season records from 14 sites, mainly in Essex and Surrey, possibly indicating 50% of true status. Spring passage during March and April was lower than in previous years, with maxima of 70 at Beddington S.F. on Mar. 28th and 54 at Cole Green on Apr. 3rd. The autumn passage was also below average with a maximum of 160 at Rainham on Oct. 9th, where the largest wintering numbers were up to 100 in January. Breeding season distribution and Inner London records are given.

- E Thames Marshes, Thurrock-Rainham-Barking, at least thirty pairs were present, this figure continues in similar strength to the *Atlas* figures.
- H Single pairs bred at Amwell G.P. and Croxley Moor.
- M Hounslow Heath, ten territories held, and a similar number at Shepperton. Cranfield G.P. and Islington, single singing males at each site. Inner London: small numbers in Hyde Park and Regent's Park from Mar. 19th to Apr. 20th, and also in September, October and November.

- K The only pair reported in the breeding season was from Bromley Common.
- S Wimbledon Common, six pairs present. Banstead Downs, four pairs bred. Walton Heath, one pair bred. In the Tadworth to Banstead area, a 35% drop in numbers from last year was estimated. Inner London: Surrey Docks, up to eight pairs probably bred, and max. of 20 there on Feb. 28th.

323 Red-throated Pipit

- E Rainham Marsh, one in almost complete summer plumage on May 1st (JW).

This is the third record for the London Area this century and has been accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, all have been in spring.

324a Rock Pipit

From January to March up to five were regularly seen at Rainham Marsh with a maximum of eight on Feb. 19th. On the Kent side of the river there were up to four regularly at Dartford Marsh and an exceptional 14 at Swanscombe on Jan. 10th. Away from the river singles were recorded at Barn Elms Res. on Jan. 11th and at Walthamstow Res. on Jan. 15th. Spring passage was poor with only five birds at three inland sites between Mar. 13th and Apr. 12th but included a summer plumage bird of the Scandinavian race *littoralis* at Barn Elms Res. on the latter date.

Autumn passage lasted from Oct. 1st to Dec. 1st at six inland sites with most of the records in October, maximum of four at Walthamstow Res. on the 12th. Along the Lower Thames there were up to six in December at Rainham Marsh and three to four throughout November and December at Dartford Marsh.

324b Water Pipit

- E Berwick Ponds, two on Jan. 17th. Rainham Marsh, singles from Apr. 17th, 20th to 24th (MKD, JMH, NI). Sewardstone, a single from Mar. 27th to 31st (JF,GJW). Walthamstow Res., one on Mar. 16th (PF).
- H Amwell G.P., singles on Mar. 24th and Apr. 22nd (BR). Cheshunt G.P., singles on Mar. 27th and from Dec. 28th to 30th (JF,GJW). Hilfield Park Res., one on Mar. 31st and Apr. 2nd (CIB). St. Albans, one on Mar. 15th (HNHS). Stocker's Farm, one on Jan. 2nd (RRD).
- M Springwell Watercress Beds, singles from Jan. 26th to Mar. 5th (HB,TRD,JE,RRD).
- B Queen Mother Res., one on Mar. 24th (JE).
- K Thamesmead, one on Nov. 10th (PJS).
- S Beddington S.F., two in January and February and one to Mar. 21st, then three from Apr. 1st to 5th (SJA,GDJM,PJS), in autumn a single from Oct. 18th, then a maximum of five on Nov. 4th (SJA), two present during December (GDJM).

325 Yellow Wagtail

The first arrivals in spring were at five sites on April 4th and the last departing bird was at Stanstead Abbots G.P. on Nov. 14th. Breeding season status unchanged in most areas, distribution, Inner London records and birds considered by the observers to be of the races Blue-headed (*flava*) and Sykes's (*beema*) are given.

- E Thames Marshes from Aveley to Beckton, at least 33 pairs present, and a Blue-headed male from Apr. 11th onwards, then a pair on May 22nd (MKD). Lea Valley from Nazeing to Walthamstow, about 40 pairs present, a Blue-headed male at Walthamstow Res. on Apr. 22nd (JF,PF,GJW).
- H Amwell G.P., two pairs. Cole Green four pairs. Colney Heath, at least one pair bred. Cooper's Green, five pairs. Rye Meads S.F., four pairs, and a male showing the characters of Sykes's at Hatfield on Apr. 21st. Male Blue-headed individuals were seen at Cooper's Green, Cole Green, Hilfield Park Res., Stocker's Lake, and Rickmansworth between Apr. 19th and May 7th with a maximum of four at Hilfield Park Res., on Apr. 30th (HNHS,CIB,TRD).
- M Breeding pairs at Harlington G.P., Islington, Queen Mary Res., and Shepperton. An autumn roost at Bedfont Quarry reached over 100 in September (LGF,RRG *et al.*). Single Blue-headed males were at Alexandra Park on Apr. 28th and at Harefield Moor G.P. on Apr. 16th (JAH,PN *et al.*). Inner London: Hyde Park, St. James's Park, and Regent's Park, singles in May and September (DAB,DAM,JPW *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., a pair may have bred there or nearby (RRG).
- K Breeding pairs reported from Dartford Marsh, Erith Marsh, and Sevenoaks G.P. (DRG,DFY,PJS).
- S Breeding proved only at Beddington S.F., not reported from previously known sites. Blue-headed males at Barn Elms Res. on Apr. 21st and Apr. 29th to May 1st (PEB,RBH). Inner London: Surrey Docks, five to ten pairs nested.

327 Grey Wagtail

A paper on the 1979-1981 survey appears on page 106. Severe frosts in January probably affected this species, as the numbers of wintering birds and breeding pairs were lower in all areas.

- E Pairs nested successfully at Walthamstow Res. and Chingford (JF,PF).
- H Pairs bred at Croxley Mill, Stocker's Lake, St. Albans and Troy Mill G.P. (HNHS).
- M Successful breeding recorded from pairs at Bentley Priory N.R., Grand Union Canal, Hampstead Heath and Wood Green Res. (NB,HB,MN *et al.*). Inner London: reported from only six localities from September and October in Regent's Park (sby).
- K Probably bred at Bromley Common, Eltham and Fooks Cray Meadows (JW-C,GD).
- S Definite proof of breeding reported from East Molesey, Esher, Kingston and Wimbledon Common and probably on the River Thames at Kew and Barn Elms Res. (WRI,EDM,RBH *et al.*).

328a Pied Wagtail

This species appeared to be affected more than others by the severe cold in December 1981 and January 1982 with a 25% drop in numbers of birds noted at Rainham Marsh, Hainault and Romford. Large roosts/counts and Inner London breeding records are given

- E Rainham Marsh, 50 at roost on Mar. 6th increased to 100 on Nov. 20th.
- H Rye Power Station, the roost held 451 in January, 429 in February and 514 in March but was not occupied in the autumn.

- M Inner London: St. Stephen's, Walbrook, a roost estimated at a few hundred in February. Hyde Park, at least one pair bred.
- K Littlebrook G.P., at least 100 at roost in September and October. Orpington Civic Hall, maxima of 720 at roost on Feb. 28th and 750 on Dec. 18th. Dunton Green, a regular roost was watched throughout the year and produced the following numbers;

May 28th	June 24th	July 30th	Aug. 26th	Sept. 28th	Oct. 28th	Nov. 26th	Dec. 23rd
62	60	69	80	90	nil	150	270

- S Inner London: River Thames, South Bank, Waterloo, one repeatedly collecting food and flying off presumably to feed young on July 29th.

328b White Wagtail

- E A total of 30 reported from seven localities between Mar. 6th and May 5th (MKD,PF,JF *et al.*).
- H Cheshunt G.P., singles on Apr. 9th and May 2nd (LVPG). Broxbourne G.P., singles on Apr. 1st and 7th. Hilfield Park Res., on Mar. 21st and Apr. 21st (CIB *et al.*). Amwell G.P., one on Sept. 18th (CJW).
- M Harlington, one on Mar. 24th (MHY). King George VI Res., one on Apr. 10th and two on Apr. 11th (PN). Longford, one on Apr. 23rd (JAH). Staines Res., two on Apr. 8th (AJL).
- B Queen Mother Res., one on May 12th (JE). Wraysbury G.P., one on Mar. 14th (RRG).
- K Orpington, one on Sept. 16th (RJC).
- S Barn Elms Res., up to three on several dates between Mar. 22nd and May 8th, and one on Sept. 13th (PEB,RBH). Beddington S.F., one on Apr. 17th (JH). New Addington, one on Mar. 30th (JCW).

329 Waxwing

- E° Harlow, two birds seen frequently from Mar. 13th together or alone in several localities until Apr. 30th (HPM,DHM, *et al.*).
- H Potters Bar, one on Jan. 12th. Barnet, one on Jan. 14th (*per* HNHS).
- M Islington, one from Jan. 10th to 13th (JBN).
- K Bexleyheath, one on Jan. 12th for several days (MP).
- S Southfields, Wimbledon, one from Feb. 6th to Mar. 3rd. (DCR,RHK *et al.*).

330 Dipper

- K River Darent, Sevenoaks, one (race unknown) first seen on Jan. 11th, was present until the 20th, then next observed on Feb. 17th (DCN,RHT, *et al.*). This is the eleventh record for the London Area this century.

331 Wren

Estimates received indicate a slight decrease in the population but evidently not too severely affected by the cold spell in January. Only one record was received from Inner London.

- H Stocker's Lake, a count of 22 breeding pairs was the lowest for six years and a drop of 12 pairs from 1981 (TRD). Maple Cross S.F., 50 on Jan. 10th (MCRG).
- M Osterley Park, the census plot revealed 19 territories, a further increase from previous years (DGH). Inner London: St. James's Park, one pair probably bred (PJO).

- K Sevenoaks G.P., a count of 33 in April and June (AHH). Joyden's Wood and Littlebrook, results from retrap data appeared to be only slightly down from the previous year (DRG).
- S Park Downs, Banstead, 24 pairs were present and judged to be average despite the cold spell at the beginning of the year (RHBF).

333 Dunnock

A comparison with previous years is difficult owing to the smallest ever number of records received. More records are desperately needed to establish any changes in the population.

A definite decrease at Littlebrook, Dartford after the January cold spell, but 27 were counted at Beddington S.F. on Jan. 24th. The only Inner London records were, a pair nest building in Russell Square on Apr. 21st and at least one pair bred in St. James's Park.

336 Robin

More records were received than in recent years and reflect the widespread distribution away from the built-up areas of central London from where only one record was received (once again highlighting the dearth of official observers in the Royal Parks) but are clearly needed to assess the population. Selected counts and breeding season numbers are given.

- E Hainault, Havering and Rainham, the population remained stable and suffered no serious effects of the severe winter frosts.
- H Rye Meads S.F., c. 8 pairs bred. Hilfield Park Res., ten singing males in February. Maple Cross S.F., 30 on Jan. 10th.
- M Inner London: St. James's Park, at least one pair bred.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 15 on Sept. 10th.
- K Littlebrook, Dartford, normal numbers reported after the January cold spell.
- S Bookham Common, 28 territories in 40 acres of oak woodland and 20 territories in 96 acres of scrub, the same levels of population as in 1981. Pilgrim Fort Field Study Centre, Caterham, ten together at a bird table during heavy snow on Nov. 11th.

338 Nightingale

As in 1980 it is not clear whether the species has declined (quite rapidly if so) or whether the coverage is very incomplete. In contrast to other recent years there is a total lack of records from many favoured localities especially the Surrey heaths and commons. All records are given.

- E Epping Forest, at least two singing males present in May and June (PAB, ID). Hainault Forest, one pair probably bred, also two other singing males in May and June (MKD).
- H Cheshunt G.P., a singing male from Apr. 25th to May 25th (GJW). Highfield Wood, one on May 23rd (HNHS).
- M Harefield, a singing male from May 11th to 18th (JE, PN).
- K Knockholt, one singing in May (BB). Hoblingwell Wood, one singing on Apr. 24th (KHP). Letts Green, one singing on May 22nd (RT).
- S Bookham Common, one or two singing males throughout May and one territory held in the breeding season, a drop from three pairs in 1978 and 1980 and two pairs in 1979 and 1981 (GBN).

340 Bluethroat

- S Tadworth, a male of the red-spotted race *L.s. svecica* was found dying in a garden on May 20th (Mr. and Mrs. Tremlett *per* RHBF). This is the 11th record for the London Area this century, the first since September 1977 and only the second in spring.

342 Black Redstart

It is unclear if this species had a poor breeding year in 1982 or whether coverage of some previous sites has been neglected. Changes have taken place in at least two of the sites known to recorders and therefore the situation can not be presented as before. We appeal for more information in 1983.

- E Beckton, at least two pairs bred, probably more (AFW). Dagenham, one pair bred (MKD). Ockendon, one on Aug. 6th (IT). Rainham, one on July 21st (JMH). Wintering birds were at King George V, Wm. Girling and Walthamstow Reservoirs in January, February, and November (GBS, JF *et al.*).
- E/M Two singing males in the Brimsdown/Sewardstone area, and a pair just outside the previous site at the Tottenham Gasworks complex, but no nest or young detected (CF, JF *et al.*).
- H Rye House Power Stn., a pair in May and June, but no proof of breeding (HNHS). Amwell G.P., one on Mar. 24th (CCL, BR). Broxbourne G.P., singles on April 27th, and on several dates in August until Sept. 8th (LVPG). Hatfield Aerodrome, one on Dec. 2nd. Beech Farm, Hatfield, one on April 24th (HNHS).
- M Alexandra Park, singles on four dates in April (NB). Drayton Park, a singing male in May, which could relate to a breeding site, also one on Jan. 16th, and throughout December (CA, TG). Queen Mary G.P., two on Oct. 30th, and one in late December (HRG). Staines Res., singles on Oct. 30th, Nov. 16th and 20th (LGF, PN *et al.*). Inner London: Broad Street Station, a singing male in May (PJC).
- K Dartford Power Station, at least two pairs bred (DRG). Singles in May at Greenwich and Swanscombe (IC, AFW). Bromley, one on Oct. 27th (WTB). Eltham, one on Oct. 30th (JM).
- S Wintering birds at Hersham G.P. in December and at Mitcham from Nov. 6th to 11th (WRI, MCC). Buckland S.P., one on Oct. 30th, (ID). Leatherhead, one from Oct. 31st to Nov. 4th (EST). Inner London: Bankside, singles during May, June, September and in early October (RS).

343 Redstart

Although the population has fluctuated markedly in the past, the present slow and seemingly irreversible downward trend continues as shown in the table below.

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Proved breeding	9	5	2	2	4	1	2	—	1	—	—
Possible breeding	15	11	7	10	6	6	3	4	6	8	8

The *Atlas* documented the final days of large scale nesting in the London Area when 90 pairs held territory in 1963 and of those approximately 56 singing males were in Epping Forest. In Richmond Park the sad story is reflected from 25 pairs in 1936 to nine in 1953 and none at all by 1974. Limpsfield Chart even in recent times held up to

four pairs but since 1977 they have all gone. How much longer will it be before the Redstart is no more than a notable passage migrant through the Area.

- E Epping Forest, three singing males, possibly two pairs but no proof of nesting (MKD, JF *et al.*) Thorndon Park, two or three singing males (RL). Dagnam Park, one on Sept. 12th (DS). Harlow Woods, one from Sept. 5th to 11th (TW).
- H Northaw Great Wood, two singing males present. Broxbourne Woods, a male on May 23rd (HNHS). Amwell G.P., one on July 20th (BR). Potters Bar, one on Sept. 19th (JPW).
- M Two spring records, at Osterley Park on May 5th and Queen Mary G.P., on May 8th (DGH, HRG). Alexandra Park, one or two from Sept. 19th to 26th (NB). Darland's Lake, one on Sept. 13th (DW). Hounslow Heath, one on Sept. 19th (SF). Kempton Park Res., one on Sept. 18th (BAR). Mill Hill, one on Aug. 26th (WAH). Queen Mary G.P. an immature from Aug. 7th to 19th and again on the 28th, singles also on Sept. 4th and Oct. 2nd (HRG). Inner London: Regent's Park, singles in spring between Apr. 21st. and May 11th and in autumn from Sept. 2nd to 6th also one Oct. 5th (TD, SBY, JPW).
- B Wraysbury G.P. a female trapped on Aug. 27th (RRG).
- K Hoblingwell Wood, one on Aug. 21st (KHP). Keston, one on Apr. 19th. West Wickham, one on Aug. 26th (BB).
- S Barn Elms Res. one on May 5th (RBH). Beddington S.F., singles on Apr. 15th, May 3rd, Sept. 3rd and 25th (DAC, SWG *et al.*). Ham Lands, one on Sept. 4th (WGT). Purley, one on Sept. 26th (CFD).

344 Whinchat

A pair nested at Rainham Marsh where they were present in 1980, no other reports of suspected breeding were received. Spring passage began on April 20th with a single at Alexandra Park, several more were reported in the next few days from six areas. A large influx in early May was noted at 16 localities, with maxima of 6 at Osterley Park and five on the 3rd at Alexandra Park and West Wickham. There were birds at seven places on May 11th, a maximum of three on Hampstead Heath. No more were reported after May 18th. The first Autumn record was on July 10th at Rye Meads S.F. and the next followed on Aug. 10th at Thamesmead and Kenton. Movement in August was fairly light with numbers increasing towards the end of the month, a maximum of nine on Staines Moor on 30th. Peak numbers during September were 12 at Beddington S.F. on the 3rd and a maximum of 17 at Rainham on the 12th. October records were fewer with the highest at Holmethorpe S.P., four on 3rd, until one at Epsom Downs on 25th preceded the very last at the Brent Res. on Nov. 2nd.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, three on May 5th, singles on Sept. 6th and Oct. 5th, with a maximum of four on Sept. 14th (ESB, JPW). Inner London: Rotherhithe, one on Sept. 7th (WGT). Surrey Docks, singles on April 28th and May 4th, with a maximum of four on May 3rd (DAM).

345 Stonechat

The number of breeding pairs was only slightly less than in 1981, the decrease appeared to be mainly in Surrey, where some sites occupied last year were not used this year. A minimum of 22 pairs was reported compared with 28 in 1981.

- E Rainham Marsh, eight pairs, the majority were successful, up to six wintered. Hornchurch, three pairs, one successful. West Thurrock, one pair may have bred. Single pairs reared young at Barking Dagenham and Hornchurch and two pairs at Beckton.
- M Hounslow Heath, two pairs bred, no other breeding sites occupied.
- K Successful nesting reported from Dartford Marsh, Elmers End S.F., and Littlebrook G.P.
- S Ham Lands, a pair raised two broods successfully. A male present at Mitcham Common may have been paired. Inner London: Surrey Docks, a male trapped on Mar. 7th was the first British recovery of a Stonechat ringed in Spain.

346 Wheatear

One of the heaviest and well reported spring movements on record started with a first at Wimbledon Common on March 17th, reports from four localities followed in the next week. April numbers were well above normal, nine at Alexandra Park on 3rd, then a steady passage with a maximum of ten at Cole Green on the 25th. Numbers continued to increase during early May with up to 18 at Alexandra Park, Chessington, Cole Green, and Staines Moor and 22 at Beddington S.F. An overall count of 50 at Rainham Marsh on the 8th exceeded everywhere else and within a few days widespread passage had been noted at many places. A minimum of 150 was estimated from 55 sites.

The autumn passage was also above average with reports from 37 sites, beginning with singles at London Airport on July 29th and Perry Oaks S.F. on July 31st. In August passage was fairly light with a maxima of four at London Airport and Perry Oaks S.F. on 16th and 17th. The main peak appeared to be around Sept. 12th and with 30 at Old Slade N.R. Records continued throughout October from many areas but not exceeding five at any one locality. There were four November records, singles at Queen Mary and Staines Reservoirs on 2nd; London Airport on 14th; and at London Colney from 18th to 25th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on May 13th. Regent's Park, two on both Apr. 20th and May 11th, singles on Sept. 14th, 23rd and three on 30th. Surrey Docks, two on Apr. 21st one on 24th and three on May 3rd.

359 Ring Ouzel

- E Wanstead S.F., a male caught and ringed on Oct. 11th (CWP).
- K Beckenham, a male on April 24th (BB). Bromley Common, a male on April 21st (GD). Orpington, a male on April 5th (RJC).
- S Beddington S.F. one on Oct. 9th (DAC). Ham, a male on April 14th. (JH). Purley, one on May 9th (DAM).

A drop of 25% in records, following the familiar pattern, spring records exceeded those in autumn.

360 Blackbird

The highest numbers in January and February were 100 at Bexley and 80 at Maple Cross S.F. A study of body weights in Osterley Park in January revealed a high weight of 143 grams for one male, with three others just under 140gms this is 30-35% above the average experienced in 17 years work (DGH). These are remarkable figures in view of the fact that females normally weigh more than males. Peak

figures were reached in the latter part of the year with a general large influx of migrants in October, maxima of 150 each at both Bexley and Rye Meads S.F. on 30th. Joyden's Wood, a roost of 200 in November and December. The only Inner London records for the year was of a nest in Archbishop's Park, Lambeth (PJS) and at least one successful pair in St. James's Park (PJO).

364 Fieldfare

The highest counts reported for January were 500 each at Beddington S.F. and Bromley Common on 17th and 31st respectively. Otherwise widely distributed, many counts of 100 were received and 200 or over at Borehamwood, Thamesmead, and Osterley Park. In February Beddington S.F., Duke's Meadows, Chiswick, Wm. Girling Res., Sewardstone and West Wickham held numbers in excess of 300. March peaks were 400 each at Havering, and Roydon, 200 or more were at Hilfield Park Res and Barn Elms Res. April saw a well distributed return passage with 200 or more at Harefield and Stanstead Abbots. May records at six localities were singles at Banstead on 1st, Beddington S.F. and Broxbourne on 3rd, six at Upshire, Waltham Abbey on 2nd, and finally one at Rainham on 8th.

The only record for September was one at Thamesmead on 16th, passage was low during October, with very few until 23 and 24th when westerly movements were reported from Orpington, Ruxley and many other localities. November had moderate numbers at many places and further westerly passage was noted, particularly at Rye Meads, Nazeing, and Hampstead Heath. In the latter half of December 1,000 which were feeding in an orchard near Fishers Green roosted on islands in Cheshunt G.P. Otherwise no high concentrations were reported with only flocks of 290 at Thorney Weir on Dec. 26th and 130+ in the Caterham area on Dec. 25th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, records of up to five between January and April and on Dec. 13th four (DAB). Regent's Park, 25 during January (ID). Surrey Docks, maximum of 50 on Feb. 9th, 35 on the 28th and between 25 and 32 during March (DAM).

365 Song Thrush

The maximum concentration was 30 at Beddington S.F. on January 1st. Birds of continental origin were noted at Dartford and Littlebrook in January and February, and in Kew Gardens in November. Evidence of autumn influxes was noted in September at Hampermill G.P., and in October at East Finchley. The only Inner London breeding records were a female with well grown young in Russell Square on June 29th, and at least one pair in St. James's Park.

366 Redwing

Substantial numbers were present at the beginning of the year with seven localities reporting flocks between 100 and 200 birds in January. At the onset of the cold spell suitable habitats at Beddington S.F., Bromley Common and Hampstead Heath supported some of the peak numbers in January. February records were rather few suggesting that the huge flocks reported in south-west England at the time contained birds from the south-east counties, though there were 300 at Park Langley on the 11th and 200 at Barn Elms Res. and Queen Mary Res. on the last days of the month. March figures

showed a slight rise indicating a return movement, the maxima were 300 at Hilfield Park Res. and 200 at Pebble Coombe, Surrey between the 6th and 8th. April records doubled those of last year with maxima of 130 at Park Langley and Osterley Park on the 2nd and the last birds of the winter were two at Kew on the 21st. The only September bird was at Hilfield Park Res. on the 21st. From Oct. 3rd onward passage was much lower than usual with only two flocks exceeding 100 birds and numbers during November did not rise above the 300 at Old Slade N.R. on the 14th. December flocks were also less noticeable with 200 at Dagenham on the 6th, the same number at Fetcham on the 12th and 150 at West Wickham on the 29th being the highest reported and roosts at Caterham and Headley Heath in November and December contained maxima of 100 and 250 respectively. Inner London: Holland Park, at least 60 on Feb. 5th had risen to 100 by Feb. 11th (TAHS). Hyde Park, three on Jan. 14th and up to six between Mar. 22nd and 25th (DAB). Regent's Park, small parties up to Mar. 25th and single birds until Apr. 26th; 30+ flew over on Oct. 19th (SBY, TD). St. James's Park, single birds in January and December (PJO).

367 Mistle Thrush

The maximum end of breeding season flocks were 36 on July 5th at Mill Hill and 22 at Hampstead Heath on Aug. 24th. At Wimbledon Common more territories were occupied than usual was the only comment given on the breeding season. Inner London: Imperial College, a pair raised two broods. River Thames, Westminster, one carrying food across the river between Victoria Tower Gardens and Archbishop's Park, Lambeth on Apr. 26th.

- H Cassiobury Park, one resident xanthocroic individual present throughout the year, normal colours replaced by or suffused with yellow.

369 Cetti's Warbler

The breeding successes of 1980 and 1981 were not repeated.

- E/H Although birds were reported from three localities in the Lea Valley there was no evidence of breeding (GJW *et al.*). None were reported from the Colne Valley.

- K Ruxley G.P., one seen and heard on Jan. 24th (ss).

373 Grasshopper Warbler

Recorded during the period Apr. 17th to Sept. 14th. Only two pairs proved to have bred compared with four in 1981 and six in 1980. In addition to these there were only 14 singing birds in summer a drop from previous years and a considerable reduction from the 90 singing birds in 1971. How accurately the 1982 figures reflect the present population is difficult to assess, once again there are notable gaps in the records received from some usual haunts, have they been deserted or were they not covered? All records are given.

- E Hainault, a male singing in May and June, possibly bred. Harlow Woods, one pair bred. Sewardstone, one singing on Apr. 25th and May 7th. Walthamstow Marsh, one singing in July.

- H Broxbourne Wood, one on June 12th was present through July to early August, two singing on June 15th. Cheshunt G.P., one on May 18th. Croxleyhall G.P., one singing on May 18th. Rye Meads, singles on Apr. 24th, July 24th and 31st. Aug. 7th and 14th and Sept. 11th. Stanstead Abbots G.P., one from Apr. 21st to May 16th.
- M Harefield, singles singing on May 11th, 18th and July 3rd and two on May 13th.
- K High Elms, near Farnborough, one on Aug. 23rd.
- S Ashted Common, one to three singing May 6th to 31st, but seven on May 24th and eight on the 27th; one singing on June 27th, July 3rd and 19th. Beddington S.F., one singing on Apr. 25th. Caterham, one singing near the by-pass on May 31st and July 10th. Epsom Common, one pair bred, the young had left the nest by the early date of May 12th. Hersham G.P., one singing on July 15th.

378 Sedge Warbler

Recorded during the period Apr. 9th to Oct. 9th. The approximate number of territories reported during the breeding season was 120 in Essex, 50 in Herts, 22 in Middx., 35 in Bucks, 10 in Kent and 18 in Surrey. The main localities (10 or more territories) are given below together with all Inner London records.

- E Berwick Ponds, 25 pairs; Rainham, 20 pairs; Sewardstone, 10 singing males; Walthamstow Marsh, 19 singing males; Walthamstow Res., 21 singing males.
- H Rye Meads, 30 pairs; Stocker's Lake, 10 pairs.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., 10 singing males. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, singles on Apr. 30th and May 5th; Regent's Park, singles on May 5th, 6th and 20th and on Sept. 1st; St. James's Park, one on May 6th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 35 singing males.

382 Reed Warbler

Recorded during the period Apr. 16th to Oct. 17th. The approximate number of territories reported during the breeding season was 160 in Essex, 60 in Herts, 40 in Middx., 32 in Bucks, 55 in Kent and 10 in Surrey. The main localities (10 or more territories) Inner London records and territories near the Inner London boundary are given below.

- E Berwick Ponds, 30 pairs; Fishers Green, 12 pairs; Ockendon, 10 singing; Rainham, 45 pairs; Walthamstow Marsh, 17 singing.
- H Rye Meads, 30 pairs; Stocker's Lake, 10 pairs.
- M Bedfont Quarry, 10; Harefield Place G.P., 10 pairs. Inner London: Regent's Park, singles on May 11th and 20th and Oct. 6th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 30 pairs.
- K Dartford Marsh, 10 pairs; Erith Marsh, 10 singing May to July; Littlebrook, 12 to 14 pairs.
- S Barn Elms Res., up to five in the breeding season. Lonsdale Road Res., one pair probably bred.

397 Lesser Whitethroat

Recorded during the period Apr. 15th to Sept. 26th. The number of territories reported was 68 compared with 71 in 1981. The distribution was 18 in Essex, six in Herts, five in Middx., 11 in Kent and 28 in Surrey. Inner London records are given.

- M Eaton Square, one singing on May 7th. Hyde Park, one on May 12th. Kensington Gardens, one on Apr. 28th, two on May 11th. Regent's Park, four on May 6th. St. James's Park, one on May 6th.
- S Bankside, SE1, one on the pavement of the river walk on Sept. 8th.

398 Whitethroat

Recorded during the period Apr. 17th to Sept. 22nd. A further increase in the number of territories reported to 172 compared with 141 in 1981. The distribution was 62 in Essex, 10 in Herts., 17 in Middx., one in Bucks, 15 in Kent and 67 in Surrey. Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, singles on May 6th, Aug. 23rd, 25th and 27th, Sept. 1st and 2nd, two on Aug. 24th.
- S Surrey Docks, one singing on May 3rd and July 2nd.

1981 Additional Record

- S Inner London: Surrey Docks, one pair bred successfully, the fourth breeding record for Inner London this century.

399 Garden Warbler

Recorded during the period Apr. 22nd to Oct. 30th. The approximate number of territories recorded was 72 compared with 48 in 1981. The distribution was 35 in Essex, 13 in Herts., none in Middx. and Bucks., nine in Kent and 15 in Surrey. Inner London records are given.

- M Holland Park, one on Apr. 26th. Kensington Gardens, three on Apr. 30th, singles on May 5th, 7th and 11th, and on Sept. 10th. Regent's Park, one on May 4th, four on May 11th, singles on Sept. 6th and 20th.

400 Blackcap

A summary of winter records and Inner London records are given.

	<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>January and February: individuals</i>	—	6	12	11	12	41
<i>localities</i>	—	4	9	6	8	27
<i>November and December: individuals</i>	1	4	4	2	3	14
<i>localities</i>	1	3	3	2	3	12

- M Eaton Square, one on top floor balcony attempted unsuccessfully to get at some nuts on Feb. 7th. Holland Park, three singing on Apr. 26th and two on May 23rd. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred, five or six territories. New River Walk, N1, one singing on Mar. 18th. Regent's Park, three or four pairs present, at least one pair bred.

408 Wood Warbler

In company with Redstart, a bird of similar habitat requirements, the years since 1972 also show a change and decline in the population. It should be borne in mind however, that the yearly picture is easily confused by determining singing birds on passage from paired birds that become silent after the eggs have hatched. The table below shows the minimum number of proved and possible breeding pairs and the small fluctuations are possibly as indicative of observer coverage in the summer months as much as an accurate breeding assessment but the overall trend is clear. Only an organised survey

would produce a true picture as not all areas are either well covered or reported on every year.

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Proved breeding	2	2	3	6	—	1	3	2	—	1	1
Possible breeding	12	21	7	9	12	4	12	4	5	10	5

All records are given.

- E Dagnam Park, two singing on Apr. 28th (DS). Epping Forest, three singing males, one pair reared young (JF,PAB). Hainault, one pair probably bred (MKD). Harlow Woods, one singing in May (TW). Havering, one singing in May (MKD).
- H Northaw Great Wood, one heard on June 13th (SGB).
- M Osterley Park, one on May 11th and a juvenile on Aug. 6th (DGH). Ruislip, one singing in Copse Wood on May 9th (RDNHS). Inner London: Regent's Park, one on May 10th (JPW).
- K Keston Common, one singing on May 3rd (BB). Orpington, one on Aug. 12th (RDN). Pett's Wood, two singing on May 1st (KHP). Sevenoaks G.P., one on May 3rd (AHH).
- S Banstead, one singing at Perrotts Wood on May 27th (RHBF). Caterham, two singing at the Pilgrim Fort Field Study Centre May 2nd to 13th (SJH). Esher, one singing at Fairmile Common on May 28th (WRI). Headley, one singing on the Heath and another nearby in early June; two singing on May 24th and four singing in early June at Nower Wood (RRG). Wimbledon Common, one singing on May 2nd (DLW).

409 Chiffchaff

A summary of winter records is followed by Inner London records.

	E	H	M	B	K	S	Total
January and February: individuals	—	—	3	—	—	3	6
localities	—	—	2	—	—	1	3
November and December: individuals	1	9	6	1	6	6	29
localities	1	5	4	1	5	6	22

- M Kensington Gardens, singles on Apr. 20th and 21st and June 4th, two on May 7th. Regent's Park, recorded between Mar. 26th and Oct. 14th.
- S Surrey Docks, one on May 3rd.

410 Willow Warbler

Recorded between Mar. 27th and Oct. 9th with a very late bird at Sevenoaks G.P. on Dec. 8th (AHH). The breeding population of Wimbledon Common was estimated at 119 pairs (EDM). Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, spring passage from Apr. 18th to May 26th; autumn passage Aug. 9th to 31st, maxima 17 on the 14th and 34 on the 17th. Kensal Green Cemetery, two singing on Apr. 30th. Regent's Park, four on Apr. 5th. St. James's Park, two on May 6th.

411 Goldcrest

Records were received from 42 areas throughout the year, but overall the yearly patterns are rather patchy, this year appears not to have been badly affected by the mid-winter cold spell. Large flocks, some breeding season and all Inner London records are given.

- H Maple Cross S.F., 20 on Dec. 11th.

- M Bushy Park, c.15 on Oct. 24th. Osterley Park, eight territories held. Inner London: Holland Park, singles on Mar. 26th and 29th, five on Nov. 5th. Hyde Park, singles on Aug. 1st and Dec. 7th. Regent's Canal, two on Dec. 8th. Regent's Park, present from Sept. 28th into October. St. James's Park, two on Nov. 16th.
- K Bromley Common, young birds seen on May 23rd and max. of 30 birds present on Oct. 17th. Joyden's Wood, 50+ in October dropped to between 30 and 40 in November.
- S Kew Gardens, present all year, two juveniles on July 28th. Wimbledon Common, c.20 on Jan. 1st and two pairs probably bred. Bookham Common, territories over the last five years —

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
40 acres of oakwood	1	—	—	—	1
96 acres of scrub-grassland	—	—	2	—	1

412 Firecrest

- E At the 1980 breeding site a singing male was present from March to August and one young was seen on Aug. 14th (TW). Hainault, a singing male on Apr. 10th and in May, one on Sept. 11th (MKD). Thorndon Park, a male on May 6th (MKD).
- H Amwell G.P., a male singing on Apr. 10th (HPM). Bishop's Wood, one on Dec. 28th (RDNHS).
- M Chiswick Park, one on Dec. 28th (TJL). Hampstead Heath, one on Nov. 6th (MN). Hampton, one on Nov. 21st (SBI) Queen Mary G.P., two males and a female, all trapped and ringed, on Nov. 30th (HRG). Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Oct. 12th (SBY).
- K Ruxley G.P., one on Nov. 20th and 27th and throughout December (CSB, SIG, ssh).
- S Ham Lands, one on Nov. 7th and 18th and Dec. 26th, two on Dec. 27th and 29th (JHT, RHT). Streatham, two on Nov. 27th and one on Nov. 30th, thought to be a third individual (AW).

413 Spotted Flycatcher

Recorded during the period Apr. 20th to Oct. 5th. The largest number of pairs reported was 14 at Hainault. Inner London records are given.

- M Belgrave Square, one pair successfully reared one brood, possibly a different pair at the nearby Eaton Square. Holland Park, present in the breeding season. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, six pairs bred. Regent's Park, at least one pair bred. Lincolns Inn Fields, an adult feeding a juvenile on Sept. 2nd. Red Lion Square, adults and young on Aug. 25th. Kensal Green Cemetery, one on Aug. 5th.

416 Pied Flycatcher

Unusually, spring records exceeded autumn records.

- E Dagnam Park, singles on May 16th and Sept. 12th (DS). Wanstead Park, a male on Apr. 14th (FRT).
- H Chorleywood Common, a female on Apr. 18th (*per* HNHS). Hilfield Park Res., a male and female on Apr. 8th, a male on Apr. 10th (CIB). Theobalds Park, a juvenile on Aug. 21st (BT).
- M Alexandra Park, a male on Apr. 24th; one on Aug. 30th (NB, APBR). Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Sept. 13th (JPW).
- B Langley Park, a male on May 3rd (BBC).
- S Beddington S.F., one on Sept. 12th (AV). Headley Heath, one on Aug. 23rd (PFB) Walton Heath, one on Sept. 12th (CKD, POD).

417 Bearded Tit

- E Rainham, four on Oct. 30th, two on Dec. 29th (MKD,RAP). West Thurrock, two on Jan. 24th and Feb. 7th (DRG).
 H Cheshunt G.P. three on Oct. 26th (MJO). Stanstead Abbotts G.P., five on Oct. 24th, two on Nov. 14th (LVPG).
 S Beddington S.F., two on Oct. 16th (GDJM).

The smallest numbers reported for several years.

1981 Correction

The comment "For the first time birds have summered in the London Area" is incorrect. In fact breeding took place at Stanborough Reedmarsh, Herts., in 1966, 1968 and 1971, and an attempt to breed was made in 1972.

418 Long-tailed Tit

The largest numbers reported were 50 at Hainault in January and February, 40 at Maple Cross S.F. on Sept. 4th and 50 at Banstead Heath on Oct. 10th. Elsewhere numbers did not exceed 32. It is said to be on the increase generally in Essex. Inner London records including breeding are given below. Breeding also took place at Bishop's Park, Fulham, just outside the Inner London boundary, for the first time.

- M Holland Park, present throughout the year. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, two pairs bred, one in each park. Regent's Park, two pairs one of which definitely bred. St. James's Park, five on Sept. 13th, four on Oct. 4th.

419 Marsh Tit

Less information was received than in 1981, but where comparable figures are available they indicate little variation in the numbers breeding, e.g. Hainault, 12 pairs in both years, Havering three pairs in both years, Bookham Common, two pairs 1982, one pair 1981. There were no Inner London records.

420 Willow Tit

Breeding season distribution is given. There were no Inner London records.

- E The number of pairs was: Berwick Ponds (2), Fishers Green (1), Hainault (5), Havering (2), Navestock (1), North Weald (1), Sewardstone (2), Waltham Abbey (5).
 H Cassiobury Park, present in the breeding season. Maple Cross S.F. probably bred. St. Albans, a pair on Apr. 26th. Stocker's Lake, three pairs, of which one is known to have bred.
 M Mill Hill, two pairs bred. Scratch Wood, a family party on July 18th.
 K Bexley, one or two throughout the year at Joyden's Wood. Bromley Common, a pair on Apr. 24th.
 S Bookham Common, one territory compared with two in 1981. Caterham area, bred. Epsom Common, at least four pairs.

422 Coal Tit

Inner London breeding records are given.

- M Hyde Park, a pair with fledged young on June 8th. St. James's Park, one pair bred.

423 Blue Tit

The largest party reported in the Area was 120+ at Hilfield Park Res. on Dec. 12th. Presumably they bred as usual in the Inner London parks, but no information has been received except for Archbishop's Park, Lambeth, where an adult was seen feeding a juvenile on June 22nd, and St. James's Park where at least one pair bred successfully and a high count of ten there on Nov. 16th.

424 Great Tit

Very poorly reported in Inner London, where no doubt they bred as usual in the parks. St. James's Park, one pair probably bred, was the only record.

425 Nuthatch

Breeding in nest boxes was reported from Theobalds Park, five pairs, and Perrotts Wood, Banstead, two pairs. Inner London records are given.

- M Holland Park, present from the beginning of the year until Mar. 26th. Kensington Gardens, one pair bred. Regent's Park, one pair present all year.

427 Treecreeper

Insufficient information to assess the status, though records indicate that it breeds regularly in the more suitable habitats, particularly south of the Thames. More seriously no information has been received for Inner London where it has maintained a tenuous hold as a breeding species for many years. If it has now ceased to breed this should be recorded.

430 Golden Oriole

- E Hainault Forest, a male seen and heard on May 13th (MKD). Harlow Woods, a male on June 20th (TW).

- H Northaw Great Wood, a male on May 1st and 5th (TA).

The third year in succession that birds have occurred in the Area. Since 1970 there have been 14 records all, except one, in spring with May the commonest month of occurrence.

432 Red-backed Shrike

- S Headley Heath, a female on May 14th (CKD,POD).

434 Great Grey Shrike

- E Sewardstone, one on Mar. 28th (GJW) and one from Oct. 30th to December remaining into 1983 (GBS,CFH,JF,AJG).

- H Amwell G.P., one from Jan. 1st to Apr. 2nd had been present at the end of 1981 (CCL,JF,GJW). Cheshunt G.P., one from Dec. 13th to 31st (GJW). Rye Meads, one on Feb. 27th and 28th and Mar. 20th and 29th was probably the Amwell bird (RMRG).

- B Black Park, one on Jan. 6th (GAR).

436 Jay

The only information received for Inner London was of a pair which bred at Compton Road, Islington. Presumably they still breed in some of the parks.

437 Magpie

The maxima at roosts were 60+ at Hilfield Park Res., on Mar. 11th, and 63 near Caterham School on Nov. 25th. Inner London breeding records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred. Brompton Cemetery, one pair bred. St. James's Park, one pair attempted to nest but nest destroyed by the bird-keeper.
- S Surrey Docks, one pair probably nesting.

438 Nutcracker

1963 Additional Record

- K Springhead, Northfleet, one trapped on Aug. 26th.

1968 Additional Record

- H Watford, one in November.

Both records have been accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee but neither record has previously been published in the *L.B.R.* These two take the London Area total to 12, of which nine were in 1968.

440 Jackdaw

The largest roost in use throughout the year was at Sevenoaks G.P. where there were 400 on Jan. 10th and 600 in June. Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, three flying over on Mar. 23rd. St. Mary's church, Islington, two on Mar. 9th.

441 Rook

Rookeries and Inner London records are given.

- E Curtismill, 38 nests. Passingford to Ongar, eight rookeries totalling 133 nests. Theydon Bois, 15 nests.
- M Inner London: Regent's Park, one flew N. on Mar. 22nd.
- B Denham Place, 56 nests.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 30 nests.
- S Walton Downs, 42 nests.

442a Carrion Crow

The largest number reported was 1,000+ at a pre-roost gathering at Wimbledon Common on Jan. 1st. Another pre-roost gathering at Hampstead Heath on Dec. 5th totalled 544, and there were 500 at Holmethorpe S.P., on Apr. 9th. Some Inner London records are given.

- M Fulham, pairs bred at Parsons Green and Fulham Palace Road, both in plane trees. Green Park, one pair bred successfully. Islington, pairs bred at Cannonbury Tower and St. Mary's church. A pair were building a nest at Russell Square on Apr. 16th.
- S Surrey Docks, a resident flock of c.50.

442b Hooded Crow

- E Rainham Marsh, one on Mar. 12th, 13th and 20th (MKD,NI).

444 Starling

A roost at Darenth in January and February was used by 40,000 to 50,000 birds. It had been occupied by similar numbers in January and December, 1981, but they did not return at the end of 1982. A post-breeding roost at Maple Cross S.F. in July was used by up to 8,000, 99% juveniles. At the end of August and in September even larger numbers, 15,000 to 20,000 used a roost at Bedfont Quarry. The only autumn passage noted was on Oct. 19th when 1,000+ were noted between 09.00 and 10.00 hrs. at Regent's Park, and an unspecified number moved W. at East Finchley. Finally on Dec. 29th one was seen carrying nest material under the eaves of a house in Potters Bar.

446 House Sparrow

Roosts of 1,000 or more are given.

- E Dagenham, 4,000 on Jan. 31st, 1,500 on Feb. 27th. Nags Head S.F., 1,000 on July 31st.
- M Brent Cross, 1,000+ on Oct. 22nd.
- S Tooting, 2,200 on Oct. 29th.

448 Tree Sparrow

In the first three months of the year there were flocks of 100 to 125 at four localities. Flocks of this size were not seen again until the last three months of the year and then only at two localities with maxima of 150 at Beddington S.F., and 160 at Bromley Common on Dec. 31st. There were thus fewer large flocks than in 1981. Some other comments suggest a decline, at least in some areas. 'Becoming scarce' at Maple Cross S.F. 'Once a familiar and numerous species at this site, it is now reduced to occasional single figures in winter only' at Queen Mary G.P. 'Bred, probably a slight decline from 25 pairs in 1981' at Osterley Park. Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, 19 flying over on Oct. 1st; one on Oct. 15th, seven on Nov. 13th.
- S Surrey Docks, a wintering flock, 15 on Feb. 9th, 20 on Feb. 28th.

451 Chaffinch

In the first three months of the year flocks of 100 or more were seen at seven localities, the maximum 220 on Mar. 14th at Bromley Common. Small scale westerly movements occurred in October, the peak being on the 24th when 809 were noted at Orpington and smaller numbers at Stoke Newington and East Finchley. Flocks of 100 or more were again seen at seven localities in November and December, the maxima being 220 at Theydon Bois on Nov. 14th and 200 at Tadworth/Walton Downs on Nov. 16th. No information has been received for Inner London.

452 Brambling

At the beginning of the year reported from 37 localities during the period from Jan. 1st to May 1st. Flocks of 100 or more were seen at only three localities. An isolated summer record was of a male at Uxbridge on July 12th (CJH). First arrivals in the autumn were 20 at Orpington flying W. on Oct. 17th (BB). Thereafter they were very

scarce, the rest of October producing only five more birds, the whole of November only four, and December only 13. Details of flocks of 100 or more and Inner London records are given.

- E Beckton, 100 on Feb. 18th. Rainham Marsh, 125 on Jan. 23rd, 150 on Feb. 1st, 100 on Feb. 13th and 19th (MKD).
- M Inner London: Regent's Park, a female on Mar. 25th; two on Oct. 28th (TD).
- S Beddington S.F., 100 January to mid-February (DAC,NHM).

453 Serin

- H Stanstead Abbots, a male on May 26th (TJ,BS).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the third record for the London Area this century, the last was in March 1974.

455 Greenfinch

No large flocks were reported in January. In February the largest numbers, 220, 150 and 120, were all at roosts. In March and April movements were evidently taking place. In these months JPW ringed 1,500 at Potters Bar and comments 'very heavy passage of Greenfinches which always move through at this time of year, generally from SSW to NNE'. At Claybury, Essex, where there were 40 on Feb. 28th but 300 on Mar. 9th and 200 on the 14th, cwp comments 'active ringing but no retraps indicating large influx'. There were several hundred at Epping S.F. on Mar. 28th. In the autumn 250+ flew over Regent's Park on Oct. 19th and there were movements there on most days in October. The largest flock at this period was 200+ in October and November feeding on marrows left in a field at Stonehill Farm, Bexley. Inner London records are given, but did not include details of breeding pairs.

- M Inner London: Kensal Green Cemetery, 15 on Dec. 2nd. Regent's Park, 250+ flying over on Oct. 19th and movements on most other days in October. St. James's Park, one pair bred. Vincent Square SW1, one singing on Apr. 27th.

456 Goldfinch

Flocks after the breeding season were on a much smaller scale than in recent years and the only number of 100 or more was 150+ at Epsom/Walton Downs on Sept. 18th. Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, recorded in all months; flock of 40 in August and September. St. James's Park, one on Nov. 9th. Tate Gallery, one on Apr. 27th.
- S Surrey Docks, 10 on May 31st, probably bred.

457 Siskin

Following the record numbers in December 1981, numbers remained high throughout January with flocks of 100 or more at twelve localities, the largest being of 370 and 350. Numbers declined in February and March with flocks of 100 or more at only two localities in February and one in March. Most had left by mid-April and the last straggler was seen on May 1st. First arrivals in the autumn were

on Oct. 9th, but the first large party was 78 at Stocker's Lake on Nov. 27th, which proved to be the maximum for the last three months, no other flock exceeded 50. Flocks of 100 or more and Inner London records are given.

- E Fishers Green, 130 on Jan. 30th. Valentines Park, 100 on Jan. 10th. Waltham Abbey, 350 in January the maximum.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 370 on Jan. 17th. Stocker's Lake, 150 on Jan. 1st and 7th, but 250 on the 2nd.
- M Bushy Park, 200 on Jan. 1st. Harefield Moor G.P., 150 on Jan. 17th, 155 on Jan. 23rd, 140 on Feb. 12th. Inner London: Hyde Park, singles on Jan. 11th, Jan. 21st and Mar. 26th. Regent's Park, 11 on Jan. 7th had reduced to seven when last seen on Feb. 3rd. St. James's Park, two on Feb. 1st.
- B Denham, 150 on Jan. 31st.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 110 on the 9th the maximum for January.
- S Esher, 100 at Field Common on Jan. 27th. High Broom Wood, 100 on Jan. 31st. Richmond Park, 100 on Feb. 25th. Wimbledon Common, 130 on Jan. 10th, 100 on Mar. 21st.

458 Linnet

The largest parties in January and February at three localities were from 100 to 120. Numbers in March were smaller, but in April, probably part of a return movement, there were 200 at Netherhall on the 19th and 300 at Cole Green on the 24th. In the last four months of the year flock sizes were larger than in January and February with numbers from 200 to 270 at seven localities. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park, two on May 4th. Regent's Park, recorded in all months; a flock of 14 on Oct. 1st.
- S Surrey Docks, 40 on Feb. 28th, 75 on Mar. 28th and 20 on Apr. 21st were the maxima for the months; five to ten pairs bred.

459 Twite

- E Rainham Marsh, following the influx in December 1981, numbers remained high in the first three months. The monthly maxima were 150 on Jan. 30th, 100 on Feb. 17th and 55 on Mar. 6th; the last seen were seven on Mar. 20th: Present again in small numbers from Oct. 16th, the maximum being 15 on Dec. 4th (MKD,NI).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Jan. 17th (BS *per* HNHS).

460 Redpoll

At the beginning of the year there were flocks of 100 or more at seven localities, all in the period Feb. 21st to Apr. 12th with a maximum of 370 at Petts Wood on Feb. 28th. At the end of the year only one flock of 100 was reported, at Theydon Bois on Nov. 14th. Numbers of breeding pairs in Essex are given below. Information for the other counties is patchy but birds were present in the breeding season at one locality in Herts., five in Middlesex, one in Bucks., two in Kent and five in Surrey. This total of a minimum of 58 breeding pairs is without doubt the highest in the last ten years and probably earlier (no overall totals given in the *Atlas*). The predicted expansion of the breeding range in the *Atlas* has taken a little while to gather momentum but the breeding population in the Area has grown steadily over the last few years. A thorough survey would un-

doubtedly reveal more pairs as one observer MKD produced 95% of this year's total from Essex alone. All Inner London records are given.

- E Brentwood, four pairs. Epping Forest, 20+ pairs. Hainault, ten pairs. Havering, five pairs. North Weald, eight pairs. Purfleet, one pair. Romford, one pair. Thorndon Park, six pairs.
- M Inner London: Hyde Park, singles on Jan. 24th, Feb. 15th, Apr. 26th, May 10th, June 15th and Oct. 11th. Regent's Park, a pair present on several days in May.

1981 Additional Record

- S Wimbledon Common, one pair bred.

463 Crossbill

- E Hornchurch, an immature male from Oct. 2nd to 6th (AS).
S Woodmansterne, one flew over calling on July 26th (PJS).

469 Bullfinch

Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, 30+ flew over on Oct. 1st, the largest flock reported in the Area.

470 Hawfinch

- E Dagnam Park, up to four January to May (DS). Epping Forest, three pairs with young; four on Sept. 14th (MKD). Hainault, six pairs, one with young (MKD). Harlow Woods, up to eight from Apr. 5th to 14th (CAK) Havering, two in March (MKD) Thorndon Park, two on Jan. 31st, five on July 4th (AS,RL).
- H Amwell G.P., eight on Feb. 13th, one on Mar. 28th, two on Apr. 12th (GJW). Broxbourne, one on Nov. 20th (HNHS). Broxbourne Woods, one on May 21st (BWS,HW). Cheshunt G.P., one on Jan. 16th. Chorleywood, a female killed flying into a window on May 10th. Cowheath Wood, two on May 23rd. Panshanger two pairs on Mar. 21st, one on Apr. 25th. South Mimms, two on Jan. 6th (HNHS). Whippendell Wood, two on Apr. 3rd, 4th and 9th, 10 to 12, Apr. 10th, 16th, and May 1st, five on May 11th (JDM,TRD *et al.*).
- M Bentley Priory, one or two, Mar. 28th to Apr. 12th (PAW). Harefield, singles on Apr. 25th and May 3rd. Northwood, two end of March to Apr. 8th (AC). Ruislip, one in Park Wood on Jan. 10th, a pair in Copse Wood on May 9th, and one in Bayhurst Wood on Dec. 5th (JE). Uxbridge, one during March (MHY).
- K Downe, a pair on May 3rd (BB). High Elms, six on Feb. 6th, five on Mar. 14th, a pair on Apr. 28th, a male on July 16th and a pair on Aug. 16th (RT). Lullingstone, 16 on Mar. 21st (SJG). Orpington, one in Darrick Wood on Oct. 30th (RJCr).
- S Banstead Wood, one on June 3rd (RHBF). Caterham, seven on Mar. 14th, one on Mar. 21st, one or two on several dates from May to July 1st (SJA,SJH). Fetcham, a male from Feb. 4th to 21st (DSC,CCN).

494 Snow Bunting

- E Rainham Marsh, four on Jan. 9th, three on Jan. 14th, 16th and 23rd, one on Jan. 30th and three on Feb. 6th (MKD,NI,DS). Wm. Girling

Res., one on Jan. 10th (PJV,AJG). Walthamstow Res., one on Dec. 11th (JF).

- M Staines Res., one from Nov. 13th to Dec. 1st (GMH,RBH,TJL *et al.*).
 K Ruxley G.P., two on Jan. 14th (PCF).

496 Yellowhammer

The largest gatherings were 250 at Rainham on Jan. 25th, 120 at roost at Rye Meads on Dec. 27th., and monthly maxima of 130 on Jan. 31st, 200 on Feb. 28th, 120 on Mar. 14th and still 70 on May 2nd at Bromley Common. Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, up to three present from Jan. 8th to 15th during cold spell; two flew over on Oct. 15th.

506 Reed Bunting

Fifty or more, usually at roosts, at only four localities compared with eight in 1981, the maximum was 100 at roost at Rainham Marsh on Jan. 9th. Inner London records are given.

- M Regent's Park, singles on Mar. 26th and Apr. 16th, two on Oct. 5th.
 S Surrey Docks, five to ten pairs nested, some certainly successful.

510 Corn Bunting

The number of pairs or singing males in the breeding season is given below. The total of 56 compares with 65 in 1981, the difference perhaps due to some sites not being visited by observers in 1982.

- E Barking (3), Berwick Pond (10), Hainault (10), Rainham (6).
 H Abbots Langley (2), West Hyde (3).
 M Cranford (1), Harlington (3), Harefield (1), Osterley Park (1), Shepperton (1).
 K Dartford (2), Shoreham (2), Swanscombe (4), West Wickham (3).
 S Addington (2), Purley (2).

The winter maxima were 70 at Rainham on Jan. 16th and 70 at Horton G.P. on Feb. 18th. Unusually high numbers took refuge at Beddington S.F. in the cold weather of January with a maximum count of 52 on the 30th.

Appendix I

These records refer to birds in the following categories:—

- (a) birds included on the British List but are considered to be escapes or releases;
- (b) feral geese of species on the British List;

50 Pink-footed Goose

- E Walthamstow Res., one present in October, November and December was considered to be an escaped bird (JF).

51 White-fronted Goose

- H An escaped bird was present at Maplè Cross S.F. and Stocker's Lake on several dates up to August. Singles at Amwell G.P. on Jan. 10th and at Rye Meads S.F. from Mar. 20th to 27th may also have been escapes.

54 Snow Goose

All records must be assumed to relate to escaped birds.

- H Rye Meads S.F., one on May 23rd. Stanstead Abbots, one on Oct. 4th (HNHS).
 M Shepperton G.P., one on Oct. 29th and Dec. 3rd (HWE).
 S Gatton Park, one on Feb. 11th (KDGM). Holmethorpe S.P., one on Aug. 23rd (RS).

56 Barnacle Goose

All records relate to birds of captive origin.

- E Four present at various localities all year.
 H/M One was present at various localities in the Colne Valley between April and October (mo).
 M Osterley Park, one on Sept. 7th (DGH). Shepperton G.P., one on Dec. 12th (HWE).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., one from Jan. 18th to Sept. 5th; five on May 31st (AHH).
 S Thorpe Water Park, one on Jan. 24th (DKJW). Gatton Park, six on Feb. 11th (KDGM). Holmethorpe S.P., six on Aug. 28th, smaller numbers being present at other times of the year (RS).

59 Egyptian Goose

All birds are of feral and captive origin.

- M Burnt Oak, one on July 17th (HHS). Shepperton G.P., three adults and two immatures on Sept. 10th (HWE).

60 Ruddy Shelduck

Most, if not all, records are of feral birds. The observer of the Kent bird said that it appeared to be wild, but its true origin must remain in doubt.

- E Singles at Barking, Hornchurch and Rainham on several dates throughout the year. Walthamstow Res., three present all year were joined by a fourth on Aug. 10th (JF,CA).
 H Maple Cross S.F., one on Oct. 16th (MCRG).
 M Clissold Park, Stoke Newington, up to eight present throughout the year (TG). Stoke Newington Res., a pair on Oct. 17th (GCG).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 2nd (AHH).
 S Beddington S.F., a female on July 23rd and during August (GDJM). Wandsworth, a full-winged pair associated with a pinioned pair in King George's Park from September to December (WGT).

62 Wood Duck

All birds are of captive origin.

- M Brent Res., a male on Nov. 23rd (PEB) and from Dec. 26th to the end of the year (LAB).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Jan. 17th (AHH).

Wintering Baird's Sandpiper at Staines Reservoir

G. M. Haig

At approximately 14.15 hrs. GMT on Oct. 14th, 1982 I was checking through and counting the Dunlin flock present at Staines Reservoir when a small *Calidris* wader caught my eye. Initial impressions were of a rather slender, rich brown bird with an obvious and distinctive rufous tinge to the head. It also seemed to be more or less intermediate in size between Dunlin and Little Stint, of which three were present in the flock. Having decided that here was a definitely interesting bird, though not at this stage sure of its identity, I brought it to the attention of my wife, Sandra, and ran up the causeway to inform the other two observers present, John Herbert and Gordon Richards. After scrutinising the bird for ten or fifteen minutes, during which time it gave good views in a variety of postures at 50 to 60 metres range, I and GAR almost unbelievably suggested Baird's Sandpiper. JH and SHH agreed. All the observers, except JH had recently seen an adult Baird's Sandpiper in Norfolk (August 1982) and agreed that the Staines bird was similar in all respects except that it was obviously in juvenile plumage. Extensive descriptions were then taken.

The following is based on the description taken at the time, plus further notes made in better light and less windy conditions on later dates. Bill, eyes and legs black, the bill being very slightly decurved and intermediate in length between Dunlin and Little Stint. A dark triangular mark between the bill and eye extended behind the eye as an indistinct dark eyestripe. The pale supercilium was also fairly indistinct. Head colouring was generally rich buff, with an obvious rufous tinge, the crown being somewhat darker brown with faint blackish streaks. Lower lores, chin and upper throat were pale buff, blending into the breast, which was reminiscent of Pectoral Sandpiper, being buff with darker streaking, though not as extensive or as sharply cut off as on that species. The remaining underparts were clean white. The mantle was marked in a stripy pattern, with each feather having a dark brown centre and narrow, very pale creamy border. The mantle feathers, along with all the wing coverts and tertials, were similarly coloured, being dark brown centred and fringed creamy buff. This gave the upper parts their scaly quality. The primaries, however, appeared wholly black at rest. When seen from behind, and exposed, the tail and rump had a broad blackish stripe stretching from the tail tip to the lower back, making this area seem almost totally black, the white sides of the rump and lateral tail coverts being obvious only when viewed at an angle.

In flight, or with wings stretched, a wing bar was seen, though it was less prominent than on Dunlin, and extended only faintly from the secondaries onto the first few primaries as whitish feather edging. The primaries were also considerably darker than the rest of the wing in flight. At least two primary tips extended beyond the tail at rest, giving the bird a distinctive attenuated appearance, this being exaggerated by its horizontal carriage. Compared with Dunlin in flight it had a similar wing span, but its smaller body and narrower wings combined to give it a daintier appearance.

A call was heard on three or four occasions, being a dry, rolling 'preep', once heard as a triple 'preep-preep-preep'.

It usually associated with Dunlin, but was far from predictable in this respect; especially towards the end of its stay when it sometimes proved quite elusive, skulking for hours on its own away from the Dunlin.

In feeding the bird was more of a 'pecker' than a 'prober', usually staying on the mud and was not often seen to wade, in contrast to the Dunlin which often waded belly-deep. The Baird's only resorted to this behaviour for bathing.

The bird was in fresh juvenile plumage when it first arrived, then moulted into first winter and, finally, first summer plumage. Its first winter dress was probably fully attained by mid-December, or even earlier, but sufficiently good views for detailed notes to be taken were not obtained until Dec. 28th. It was difficult to assess the order of moult so that will not be attempted here, except to say that on Nov. 6th it was noted that the mantle and scapulars had probably been moulted, as they no longer had the very pale edgings, although the wing coverts all seemed intact. Also, the rufous tinge on the head was somewhat faded, but this may only have been due to feather wear.

The following is a summary of differences between juvenile and first winter plumage: the head lacked its rufous tinge, the supercilium was more pronounced, and there was a darkish mark at the rear of the ear coverts. The lores, chin and upper throat became paler, and although the breast remained similar, there was a pale buffish wash to the rear flanks just below the breast band. Most of the upperpart feathers appeared very different — the base colour now being a rich mid-brown with brownish-buff fringes, the only exceptions being the mantle and scapulars, which in addition had a dark brown pointed stripe down the centre and had brownish buff fringes, these contrasted with the retained juvenile coverts which had pale buff edges and thereby formed a pale panel on the closed wing. The outermost tertial was also retained and has a strikingly pale whitish-buff outer web. Everything else was similar to the autumn bird. The overall effect was of a paler, though still very brown, bird (the latter feature being obvious when compared with winter plumaged Dunlin) now lacking the earlier scaly quality.

The differences between winter and spring plumage were much more difficult to ascertain and all that can be said with safety is that some of the scapulars became darker centred, and possibly the wing coverts, which also seemed paler edged. When the Dunlin began to appear in breeding plumage the Baird's became just about impossible to pick out on colour alone, as the two species were then so similar in that respect. Unfortunately the bird was gone before any detailed descriptions could be made.

The bird eventually left on Apr. 24th, 1983, having stayed for over six months. During the few days preceding its departure it became quite restless, often flying around for minutes at a time, and associating less and less with the Dunlin. Its departure, at that time seemed imminent.

During the brief freeze-up in February 1983 both it and the Dunlin were absent, but returned with the thaw. It also vacated on one or two earlier occasions, and at least once was observed flying in with a sizeable flock of Dunlin — where they had been remains a mystery.

SUMMARY

On Oct. 14th, 1982 a Baird's Sandpiper was found on the drained North basin of Staines Reservoir and, apart from a few brief vacations, remained until Apr. 24th, 1983. The weather conditions during the week or two prior to its arrival had been highly variable, with winds varying mainly between northerly and south-westerly, and had already produced two separate Pectoral Sandpipers at Staines. The Baird's, which was seen by hundreds of observers, contributed the third record for the London area (the first two being at Perry Oaks Sewage Farm in 1950 and Rainham Marsh in 1977) and was unique in a number of respects: namely, it was the first to overwinter in the U.K. and hence produced the earliest and latest records for the country, as well as the longest stayer. Also, very little seems to be known of the moult



Baird's Sandpiper at Staines Reservoir, Middx., October 1982 to April 1983, showing the change from juvenile plumage (left) to winter plumage (right). Most noticeable is the change in tone of back, mantle and coverts and the well defined edges and tips of the scapulars. (Drawing by Gavin Haig).

sequences of this species, and this is almost certainly the first time that it has been possible to observe one individual throughout its period of moult from juvenile to first summer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the ever vigilant Staines regulars, particularly John Herbert, Gordon Richards and Brendan Ryan, for helpful comments and discussion; Peter Clement, for his initial encouragement; and finally, the Thames Water Authority, for draining the reservoir in the first place!

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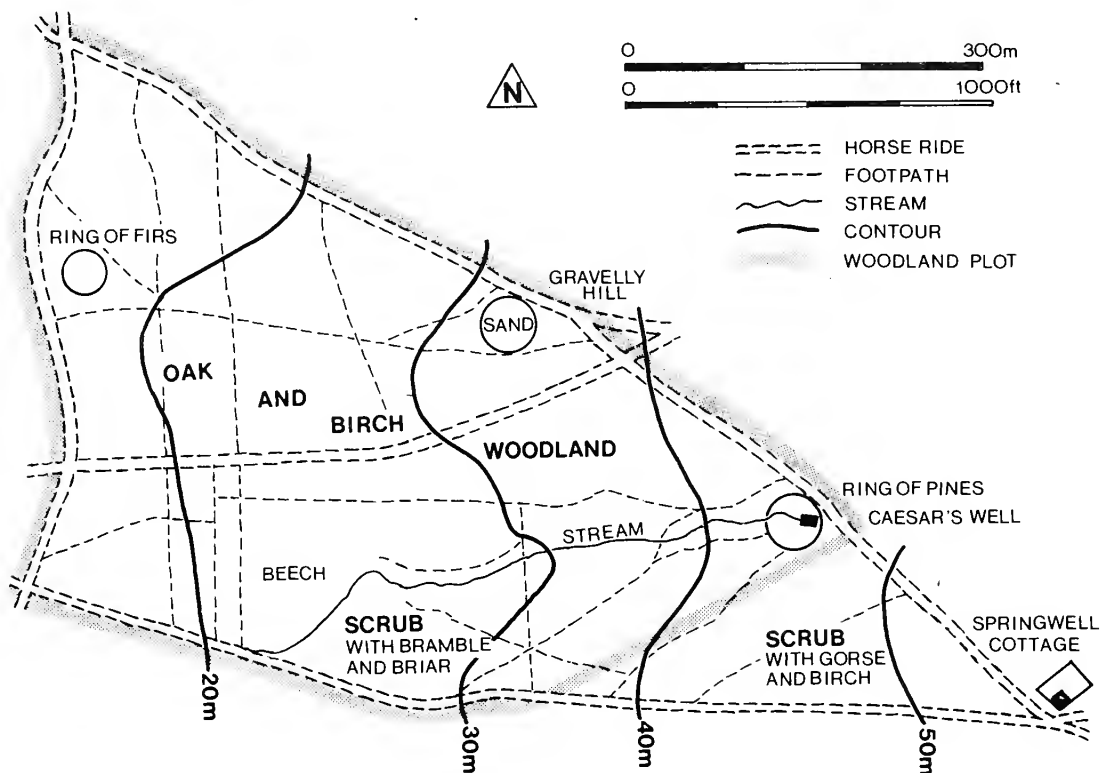
Common Bird Census Results on a Woodland Plot on Wimbledon Common 1973 to 1980

R. H. Kettle

For the eight breeding seasons, 1973 to 1980, I carried out a Common Bird Census under the British Trust for Ornithology's scheme on a 20-hectare (50-acre) plot of woodland and scrub on Wimbledon Common. Some analysis of the results and a comparison with a woodland plot on Bookham Common is presented here.

The method was the now well-known and widely used one of plotting on a map singing birds and other sightings on a series of regular visits during spring and early summer (see Williamson, K, 1964). About twelve visits were paid to the plot each year from early April to early July, mostly for a three to four hour period between 08.00 and 12.00 GMT, supplemented by one or two short evening visits of an hour or two each. Territory assessments were made by the BTO staff.

The plot is a wedge-shaped area approximately 900 metres long and 450 metres wide at the base. The whole area falls away from a height of 50m. a.s.l. at the apex to 15m. a.s.l. at the base. The soil changes from gravel at the top through a band of sandy loam (Claygate beds) to London clay on the lower part. An area of about 3 hectares at the apex consists of scrub with patches of gorse, birch and stunted oak, and some bramble and bracken and other trees. As the ground drops down, open birch wood changes to closed woodland with an increasing amount of oak. There is a small area of beech, some hornbeam and two rings of conifers. The scrub layer is dominated by holly, with some hazel, and the ground cover is mainly bracken and bramble, with some honeysuckle. A small clearing of about one hectare was increasingly overgrown with briar and bramble scrub until most of this was



cut down in 1978. This was the only appreciable management carried out on the plot during the period, but an area of about 1½ hectares of birch wood was destroyed by fire in late summer 1976 and quickly regenerated as dense birch scrub within two or three years. Except at the apex, the whole area is bordered by similar woodland.

If the results are to be treated as representing a woodland bird population it is necessary to ignore the scrub area at the apex, and for the comparison with the 16 hectare Bookham Common plot I am excluding a slightly extended area of 4 hectares.

Although the chief purpose of the BTO enquiry is to monitor changes from year to year, using the figures on a relative basis, the results are widely accepted as giving a reasonable indication of the actual population densities.

Table 1 shows the results for the whole area. Table 2 shows the figures for a 16-hectare woodland area compared with those for the Bookham Common plot for the years 1973 to 1979 only (the Bookham counts for 1980 were inadequate). It should be stressed that the Bookham Common plot is part of a large area of homogeneous oak woodland, while the Wimbledon Common woodland is less extensive, more varied and broken up by some patches of scrub. It should also be noted that Starling and Woodpigeon are not included in this census.

Table 1. Numbers of territories in 20 hectares of woodland and scrub on Wimbledon Common 1973-80

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Mallard	1	†	1	†	0	†	†	0
Kestrel*	†	†	2	1	1	†	2	†
Pheasant	1	2	1	†	0	0	0	0
Stock Dove	0	0	0	†	1	1	†	1
Cuckoo*	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1
Tawny Owl*	0	1	†	1	1	0	0	1
Green Woodpecker*	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	2
Great Spotted Woodpecker*	2	2	2	1	2	4	3	3
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker*	1	1	1	1	†	1	1	†
Wren	35	30	39	23	24	37	19	32
Duncock	19	19	19	17	21	24	11	15
Robin	40	44	47	35	44	63	51	49
Blackbird	20	28	28	26	26	39	25	33
Song Thrush	8	13	7	10	10	15	8	10
Mistle Thrush*	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	2
Garden Warbler	1	1	†	2	2	2	2	1
Blackcap	8	3	4	7	7	5	3	5
Chiffchaff	4	2	3	2	2	2	4	5
Willow Warbler	8	5	4	5	3	2	2	†
Goldcrest	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	†
Spotted Flycatcher	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Long-tailed Tit	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1
Coal Tit	8	10	12	12	11	11	11	14
Blue Tit	17	21	30	33	27	26	20	28
Great Tit	17	19	20	14	19	26	14	23
Nuthatch	2	2	3	2	5	3	3	4
Treecreeper	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	2
Jay	3	4	6	5	6	8	6	5
Magpie	1	1	2	2	3	4	3	2
Carrion Crow	3	4	4	5	5	7	6	5
Chaffinch	11	8	8	12	13	12	11	12
Linnet	1	2	1	1	2	1	†	1
Redpoll	3	3	4	6	3	4	2	†
Bullfinch	2	3	3	3	4	4	3	2

The following species held territories in only a single year:

Lesser Whitethroat 1978; Whitethroat 1977; Greenfinch 1977; Goldfinch 1973; Yellowhammer 1973; Reed Bunting 1973.

*Territories may have been only partly in the census plot.

† = present

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS (WOODLAND ONLY)

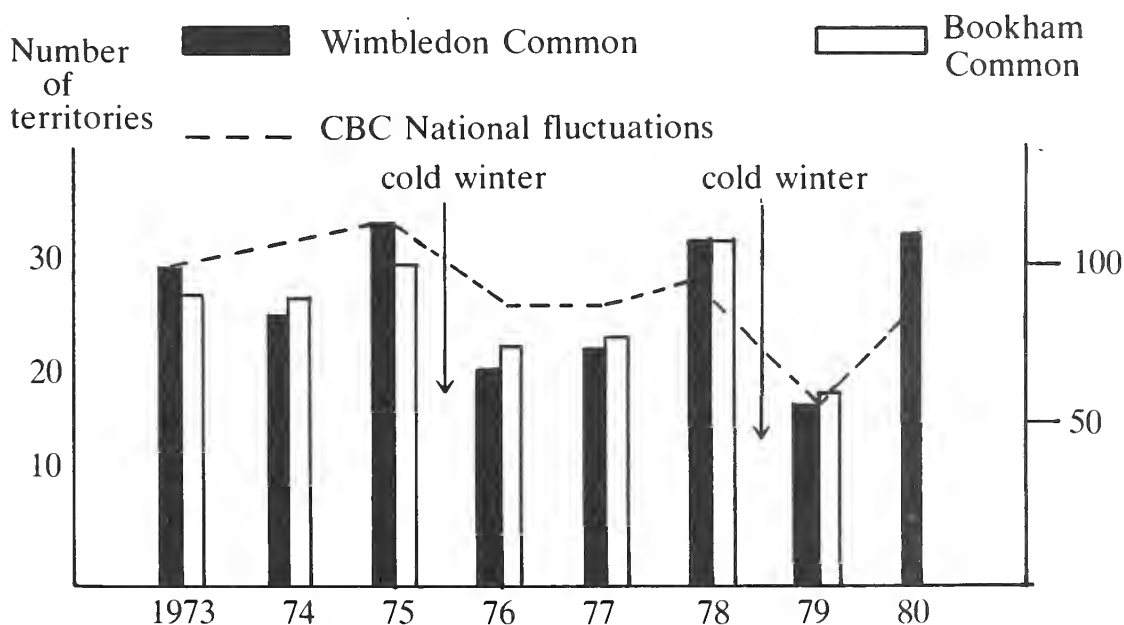
There is a fairly stable bird community of 31 or 32 species (including Woodpigeon and Starling) of which 28 were present each year. This is only slightly lower than on Bookham Common and very close to the totals found by Eric Simms in the much larger Badby Wood, Northamptonshire, 1946–50 (Simms 1971). Species occurring fairly regularly at Bookham but not at Wimbledon were Woodcock, Turtle Dove, Marsh Tit and Willow Tit, partly balanced by Kestrel and Redpoll at Wimbledon but not at Bookham.

The overall density of birds, 100 pairs per 10 hectares, is very slightly higher than at Bookham, allowing for a considerable number of pairs of Starlings and some Woodpigeons which nest on the Wimbledon Common plot, and is probably above the average level for deciduous woodland in England.

As at Bookham, the Robin is the most numerous species, with a high density of between two and three pairs per hectare, followed by Wren, Blackbird, Blue Tit and Great Tit — five of the top seven species in Simms, (1971) list, the others being Chaffinch and Willow Warbler, both of which appear to have suffered a decline during the last twenty years in south-east England.

For many species the population changes followed the national pattern shown in the annual CBC figures published by the BTO in *Bird Study*. In particular the figures for Wren clearly show the effects of the cold winters, and the correspondence with the Bookham figures is remarkably close (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Annual fluctuations of Wren populations in breeding season in 16 hectares of woodland



The dotted line represents CBC National Woodland Index (relative to 100 in 1973).

NOTES ON SPECIES

- Stock Dove:** The occurrence of this species from 1976 onwards reflects the general recovery during the 1970s from its disappearance in the London Area in the 1950s. There was a similar return at Bookham.
- Cuckoo:** The whole of one or two territories are unlikely to have been entirely within the census plot. Earlier fears for the survival of this species on the Common seem to be unfounded.
- Tawny Owl:** There is probably a pair present every year but not always recorded.
- Woodpeckers:** There does appear to have been a real increase in the number of Great Spotted Woodpeckers during the period. The Lesser Spotted is a scarce species on the whole Common with only a few pairs present each year.
- Wren:** Although considered to be the commonest bird in Britain in a few years prior to 1975, its numbers never reached those of the Robin in this woodland or at Bookham. The marked fluctuations in the population clearly show the effects of the cold spells in the winters of 1975/76 and 1978/79 and the remarkably quick recoveries. The figures agree almost exactly with those at Bookham.
- Dunnoek:** A much higher population than at Bookham, probably due to more scrub and shrub layer. The numbers remained steady except in 1979 when a drop may have been caused by the destruction of the small scrub patch which was a favoured area for this species to nest in, or by the preceding cold winter.
- Robin:** Consistently the most numerous breeding species, as at Bookham, remarkably uniformly distributed in territories of about two-fifths of a hectare (one acre) each. Clearly affected by the cold winters, but not so severely as Wren.
- The larger thrushes:** The Blackbird population was about twice that at Bookham, but that of the Song Thrush only slightly higher. There is some evidence that the Mistle Thrush population has been increasing on the Common in recent years.
- Garden Warbler and Blackcap:** The Garden Warbler occurred only in the scrub areas. After the destruction of the 'clearance' scrub a pair was present in succeeding years in dense birch scrub growing up on an area burnt down in 1976 not far away. The Blackcap, however, also occurs in the woodland proper.
- Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff:** As at Bookham the Willow Warbler has all but deserted the woodland proper. After the first year, 1973, there was a clear distinction between the habitat occupied by these two similar species. All the Willow Warbler territories have been in the scrub at the top; all the Chiffchaff territories in the woodland lower down.
- Goldcrest:** Its association with conifers is shown by there being territories only at one or both of the pine clumps.
- Tits:** The steady increase in the number of Coal Tits reflects the national trend. The Great Tit population appears to have been affected by the cold winters.
- Nuthatch and Treecreeper:** It is possible that the numbers are increasing because older trees are providing more nest sites and/or food, but it is unlikely to be the cause of an increase in so short a time.
- Corvids:** The figures confirm the impression that all three species are increasing.
- Chaffinch:** Not a numerous bird now in woodland in the London Area, but the numbers were more than twice those at Bookham.

Table 2. Numbers of territories in 16 hectares of woodland on Wimbledon Common during breeding seasons 1973-79 (with a comparison with Bookham Common figures)

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	Average
Kestrel*	0(0)	0(0)	1(0)	1(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(0)	0.4(0)
Stock Dove	0(0)	0(0)	0(1)	0(1)	1(0)	1(1)	0(1)	0.3(0.6)
Cuckoo*	2(2)	2(2)	1(1)	2(1)	2(2)	2(1)	1(2)	1.6(1.6)
Tawny Owl*	0(1)	1(1)	0(1)	1(1)	1(1)	0(1)	0(1)	0.4(1.0)
Green Woodpecker*	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)	2(0)	2(2)	3(1)	2(1)	1.7(1.0)
G. S. Woodpecker*	2(3)	2(2)	2(3)	1(3)	2(3)	4(3)	3(3)	2.3(2.9)
L. S. Woodpecker*	1(2)	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)	0(2)	1(1)	1(1)	0.9(1.3)
Wren	30(27)	25(27)	34(30)	20(22)	21(23)	33(33)	17(18)	26.4(24.3)
Duncock	12(0)	13(3)	12(1)	~ 12(2)	14(2)	15(4)	7(4)	12.1(2.3)
Robin	32(35)	37(38)	39(33)	31(33)	37(34)	53(40)	43(41)	38.9(36.3)
Blackbird	16(6)	24(12)	25(12)	22(10)	21(11)	32(11)	20(13)	22.9(10.7)
Song Thrush	5(6)	9(6)	5(4)	6(4)	7(8)	11(5)	5(4)	6.9(5.3)
Mistle Thrush*	1(2)	1(1)	1(1)	2(2)	2(1)	3(2)	2(2)	1.7(1.6)
Garden Warbler	0(0)	0(1)	0(1)	1(2)	1(2)	1(0)	1(1)	0.6(1.0)
Blackcap	7(3)	2(2)	3(2)	6(4)	6(5)	4(4)	3(4)	4.0(3.4)
Chiffchaff	4(4)	2(4)	3(1)	2(4)	2(3)	2(5)	4(4)	2.7(3.6)
Willow Warbler	4(0)	1(0)	1(2)	1(1)	0(1)	0(1)	0(2)	1.0(1.0)
Goldcrest	2(3)	2(2)	2(2)	1(1)	1(0)	2(1)	1(0)	1.6(1.3)
Spotted Flycatcher	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(1)	1(0)	1(0)	1(0)	0.4(0.1)
Long-tailed Tit	1(3)	1(2)	1(2)	2(2)	1(2)	2(1)	1(1)	1.3(1.9)
Coal Tit	6(9)	8(5)	8(5)	9(11)	9(7)	9(7)	10(5)	8.4(7.0)
Blue Tit	15(19)	18(26)	27(19)	28(18)	24(15)	22(14)	18(19)	21.4(18.6)
Great Tit	15(18)	15(19)	16(17)	12(15)	16(14)	20(13)	13(16)	15.3(16.0)
Nuthatch	2(6)	2(5)	3(4)	2(4)	5(5)	3(3)	3(5)	2.9(4.6)
Treecreeper	1(1)	1(2)	1(2)	1(1)	1(1)	2(3)	3(2)	1.4(1.9)
Jay	2(5)	4(4)	5(5)	4(5)	5(5)	7(4)	5(5)	4.6(4.7)
Magpie	1(3)	1(2)	2(2)	1(1)	2(1)	3(2)	2(3)	1.7(2.0)
Carrion Crow	3(2)	4(2)	3(2)	4(1)	4(2)	6(1)	5(2)	4.1(1.7)
Chaffinch	8(3)	6(1)	5(3)	8(3)	7(3)	8(3)	7(2)	7.0(2.6)
Redpoll	2(0)	2(0)	2(0)	3(0)	2(1)	2(0)	0(0)	1.9(0.1)
Bullfinch	1(2)	2(2)	3(2)	2(2)	3(2)	3(0)	2(2)	2.3(1.7)

Figures in brackets are those supplied by Dr. G. Beven for Bookham Common

*Territories may have been only partly in the census plot

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Dr. Geoffrey Beven for kindly supplying the CBC figures for Bookham Common for 1976-79 and to him and John Marchant of the BTO staff for reading a draft and making helpful comments. My thanks also to Ken Osborne for drawing the map so clearly, and to my wife for typing the final draft.

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An Atlas of Birds of the Western Palaearctic. By Colin Harrison. Collins, London 1982. 322 pages; 693 maps in colour, many figures and line drawings. £12.95.

Colin Harrison faced a formidable task when he decided to produce a book mapping the ranges (winter, summer and passage) of 639 Western Palaearctic birds; in fact he has gone further than this and included another 167 extralimital species closely allied to birds in the W. Palaearctic. The book is prefaced by a 30 page essay which examines the effects of climate, habitat and altitude; includes a study on the effects of glaciation and its effect on bird distribution and also a look at recent changes due to climate and human activity.

Some of the most interesting maps are those illustrating the ranges of sibling species, e.g. Marsh and Willow Tit, and also families, e.g. *Dendrocopos* woodpeckers, when the exact pattern of overlapping ranges can be seen. The author uses these to link speciation and subspeciation with the effects of glaciation and the subsequent amelioration of the climate; he also explains pair patterns – essentially species with a north to south divide such as Pine Bunting and Yellowhammer –, and also in a more complex manner trio and quadruple patterns. Vignettes of 810 species remind readers of the appearance of each bird (this is especially useful for lesser known species) and they considerably enhance the book's overall layout.

Errors are minor and generally of no significance, although it is a pity that some of the errors that appeared in Heinzel, Fitter and Parslow field guide (with which this is intended to be used as a companion volume) are repeated again e.g. the ranges of Arabian Bustard in Morocco and Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse and Red-rumped Wheatear in Israel, which relate to long extinct populations. The winter range of Lesser Crested Tern should be more extensive and Royal Tern is an odd omission; the range of Goshawk in Great Britain is also puzzlingly large. The author has clearly taken a strong taxonomic stand, for instance all Accentors have become Dunnocks and it is regrettable that these and several others do not conform to recently published lists of Western Palaearctic birds. It is also surprising that whilst Scottish Crossbill is listed as a separate species Isabelline Shrike is not although they both gained full species status at the same time.

Nevertheless this is undoubtedly a fine work and should be on the shelves of all W. Palaearctic birdwatchers; the maps are beautifully clear and well produced, and even with up to nine species on one map clever choice of colours and shading preclude any confusion over interlocking ranges. The author can be justly proud of producing an extremely worthwhile volume that will be a constant source of reference.

ANDREW MOON

Winter Wildfowl Counts in the London Area — 1947/48 to 1981/82

P. J. Oliver

INTRODUCTION

Homes (1976) summarized the results of the monthly winter wildfowl counts from their inception in 1947/48 to 1971/72. The purpose of this paper is to explain certain changes in the method of analysis of the counts and to review the results down to 1981/82 — in aggregate a span of 35 winters. The counts, which were first started in December 1937, but interrupted by the War, represent one of the longest series of biological data collected in the London Area, having been continued for longer than Power's (1910) studies of migration and only exceeded by the Society's survey of Bookham Common.

METHODS

Homes (1958 and 1976) explained the methods originally used and listed the waters covered by the survey. A feature of those methods was that when a water was missed, a figure was calculated for that locality by interpolation. If the resulting figure exceeded 10% (later 12%) of that month's total count for the species it was ignored. The winter figures were presented as the mean of not less than three mid-winter (November to February) counts for each species. An examination of the data for the ten latest seasons shows that considerable distortions can occur if averages based upon three counts in one season are compared with averages based on four counts in the next season. If less than three satisfactory counts were available no figure was published for the species for that season. In addition to these draw-backs, some waters have not been counted at all in recent seasons, thus preventing interpolation. The mean counts have continued to be published in the *London Bird Report*, but they obviously do not represent a fully accurate comparison from season to season. Similar distortions would occur if new waters were included in the census.

In order to overcome these difficulties, the counts are now analysed by comparing, each season, the results based only on those waters counted in the comparable month in the preceding season. This removes the need for interpolation and allows the winter averages to be calculated consistently on the basis of the four counts for November to February (or, for certain species, three counts for December to February) thus avoiding invalid comparisons between seasons even if waters are omitted altogether or others added. The results are then expressed as an index using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{count for season 2}}{\text{count for season 1}} \times \text{index for season 1}$$

the index for 1972/73 (the first season after that covered by Homes's review) being arbitrarily set at 100.

The results of the ten seasons 1972/73 to 1981/82 have been re-calculated in this way and in order to provide a comparison with the earlier results, the mean counts given by Homes have also been expressed as an index using the same formula. The detailed data used by Homes are not readily available and no attempt has, therefore, been made to calculate indices for those seasons where only incomplete counts were made, or to eliminate interpolations. To the extent that his published figures include interpolations or are based on only three counts in a season, the indices for those seasons are not strictly comparable with those for 1972/73 and subsequent seasons, but they provide an approximation against which the more recent figures can be compared.

RESULTS

The indices for the 35 seasons are set out in Table 1 and are presented in graphical form for certain species in Figures 1 and 2. While the purpose of the counts is primarily to determine trends, the absolute numbers (the averages of which have already been published in each year's *London Bird Report*) remain of interest as for all species other than Mallard* and Tufted Duck the census waters probably account for the bulk of the numbers occurring in the London Area. Accordingly, the maxima for each species for the ten latest seasons are given in Table 2. Homes (1976) published comparable data for the first 25 seasons. These figures serve to give a broad indication of the numbers occurring in the London Area, but it must be stressed that they cannot validly be used to determine trends as no adjustment is made for waters missed, the peak numbers may have been present for only a short period (whereas the indices give a measure of the trends based on the whole of the mid-winter period) and some peaks occurred outside that mid-winter period. Comments on individual species follow. Where appropriate these include references to the national Indices of January counts or to those for South-east England (i.e., the home counties and Dorset, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Sussex, Oxfordshire and Suffolk). These have been recalculated on a similar basis to that now adopted for the London Area and are available down to 1979/80 (Owen and Atkinson-Willes, in prep.) but as there is little correlation between them and the London indices, the figures have not been reproduced here. The references in the species accounts to Homes are to his 1976 paper in which he discussed fully the results of the first twenty-five seasons and these are referred to here only to the extent necessary to place the more recent results in context.

*Scientific names are given in the individual species accounts.

WIGEON *Anas penelope*

Very few Wigeon arrive in the London Area in November and for this reason the index has been based on the December to February counts each season. In spite of many fluctuations throughout the period the index was at precisely the same level in 1981/82 as it was at the start of the series in 1947/48. Variations in the last ten seasons have been much less than previously and in spite of an increase of nearly 150% in the severe weather of 1978/79, the highest numbers in that period occurred in the much milder winter of 1975/76. In most seasons there has been some similarity in the trends of the index with the National figures, but in view of the small numbers occurring in the London Area this is probably co-incidental.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

Homes did not deal with this species, but with an average population in 1981/82 in excess of 200 it now ranks in abundance with both Wigeon and Goldeneye. This is a recent phenomenon, however, for apart from some minor fluctuations there was a steady decline in the index from 1973/74 to a plateau in the late 1970s. By contrast, the three latest seasons have seen a sharp increase so that the index for 1981/82 is more than 60% higher than that for 1972/73. It is probably now even less common as a breeding bird in the London Area than was the case in the 1950s and 1960s, but there are a number of full-winged populations in or near the Area and it is sometimes released by wildfowling (Montier, 1977). These seem to be at least as likely as sources of the increased winter numbers as immigration from the Continent. No national or south-east England indices are available for this species for mid-winter, but those for October show a close similarity to the London figures, all three series showing a more or less steady fall to 1976/77 with a subsequent recovery.

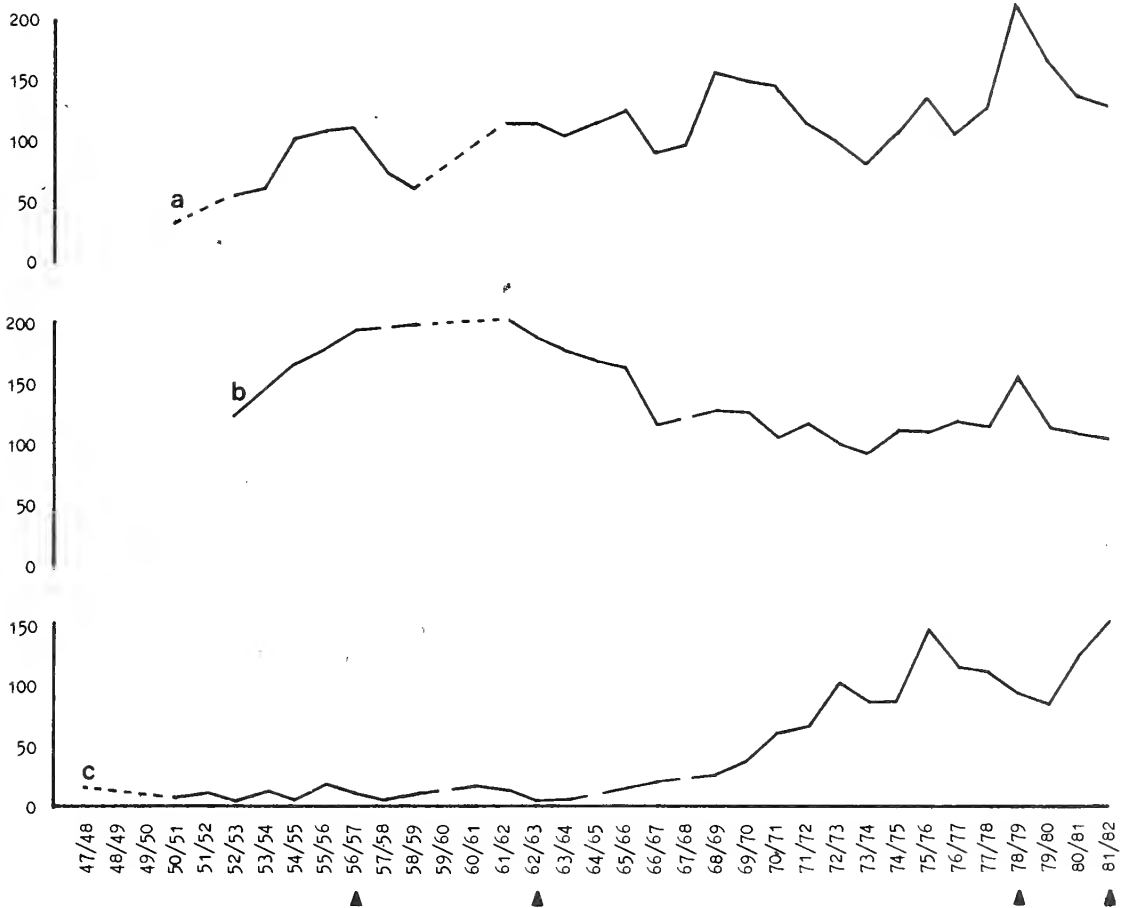


Figure 1. Index of average winter counts, 1947/8 to 1981/2; (a) Teal, (b) Mallard, (c) Shoveler. Dotted lines connect seasons where intervening counts are not available. Arrowheads indicate hard winters.

TEAL *Anas crecca* (Figure 1)

Substantial fluctuations occur in the numbers of Teal wintering in the London Area, sometimes apparently correlated with severe weather (but not consistently so) and sometimes affected by temporary changes in habitat, as when Staines Reservoir was drained in 1975/76 and 1977/78, thus providing ideal feeding conditions. Nevertheless, the long-term trend is broadly upwards as is indicated by the mean index for each five-year period (1947/48 to 1951/52 and so on), viz. : 32; 87; 83; 110; 136; 106; 156 (or 141 if the cold weather peak in 1978/79 is omitted). In spite of the decline in the last three seasons, the index at the end of the period was still more than four times as high as in 1950/51, the first season for which figures are available. The figures show no comparability with either the national or south-east England indices.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* (Figure 1)

In the first twenty seasons the numbers of Mallard increased to an all time high and then returned to their former levels, they have since remained much more constant, varying by no more (and usually much less) than 12% between seasons. The only exception was in the hard winter of 1978/79 when the index increased by just over one-third but dropped to its previous level in the next winter. This was the only severe winter when this species was obviously affected by the weather in this way. This might have been because the hard weather started a little earlier in 1963 so that by the time of the

mid-January count many ducks had moved on beyond Britain. The 1978/79 influx was reflected in the S.E. England index, but less so in the national figures, no doubt because there was a shift southwards within Britain at that time. Otherwise there has been little similarity between the indices.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata* (Figure 1)

After a long period of very consistent (albeit small) numbers Homes noted an increase from the mid-1960s which began to accelerate in the early 1970s. This trend has, with some fluctuations, continued, and in both 1975/76 and 1981/82 the index was more than seven times as high as in 1966/67 when the increase first began. The trend is confirmed by an examination of the means of the index for each of the four latest five-year periods (1962/63 to 1966/67 and so on), viz. : 11; 47; 107 and 114. No national or S.E. England indices are available for this species for mid-winter and those for November bear no similarity to the London figures.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina* (Figure 2)

The outstanding feature of this species is the exceptional peak that occurred in 1979/80 (not an especially severe winter) when the index, at 340, was nearly two and a half times as high as the previous peak. This was accounted for entirely by exceptional numbers at Staines Reservoir. Since then numbers have returned to more normal levels. Data for the first twenty years of the survey are rather incomplete, but Homes noted an increase in the last five seasons that he reviewed. Since then, apart from the large numbers in 1979/80, the index has not fluctuated greatly as the means for each five-year period commencing at 1967/68 to 1971/72 show, viz. : 76; 94 and (ignoring 1979/80) 77. The decline in the index between 1974/75 and 1977/78 was also evident in the S.E. England index, but although the recovery in numbers was

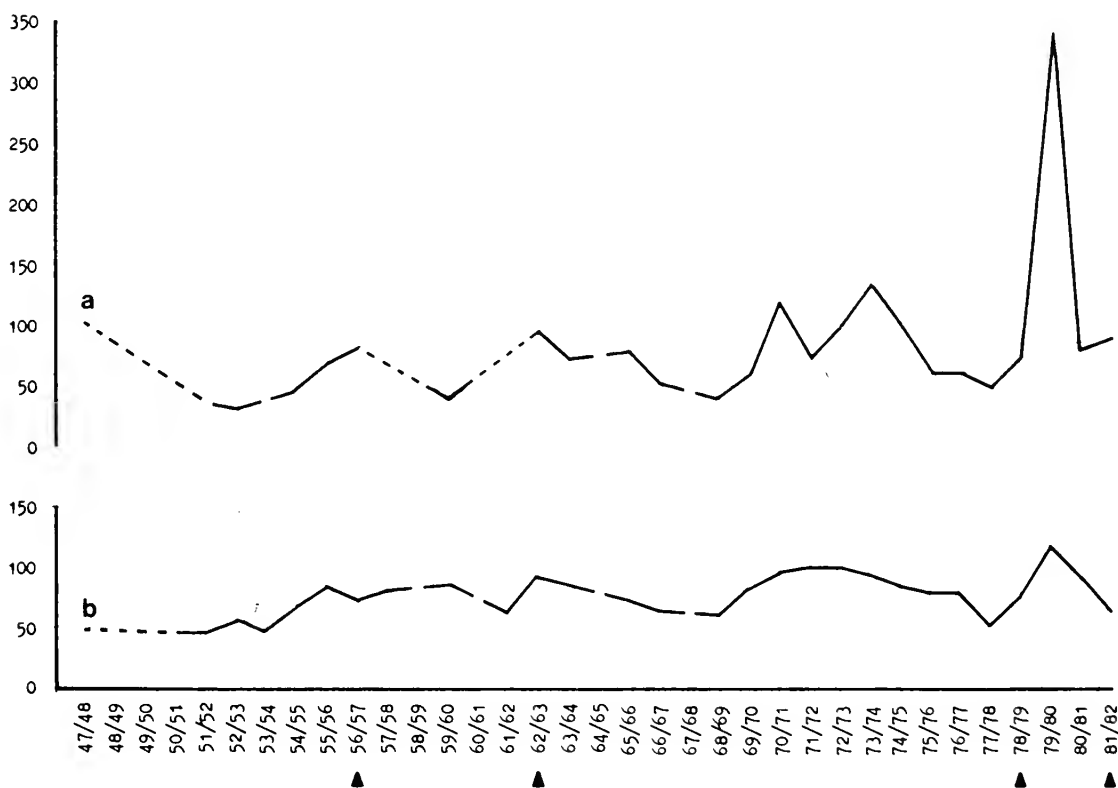


Figure 2. Index of average winter counts, 1947/8 to 1981/2; (a) Pochard, (b) Tufted Duck. Dotted lines connect seasons where intervening counts are not available. Arrowheads indicate hard winters.

apparent earlier in the latter figures the huge surge in the London Area in 1979/80 was quite lacking in either those or the national figures. Presumably, therefore, the increase in the London Area was simply the result of a redistribution within this country rather than of an influx of additional birds from the Continent.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Homes published only the maximum count for each season for this species as, at that time, only small numbers were involved. In order to provide a consistent index the figures for this species in Table 1 are based on the maximum counts throughout the period under review. Larger numbers now regularly occur and Table 3, therefore, sets out the index based upon the mean of the December to February counts for the ten latest seasons in comparison with the index shown in Table 1. November counts have been ignored for this purpose as hardly any are present by mid-November when the counts take place. The two indices show comparable trends, but that based on the mean counts reveals less sharp fluctuations.

The trend of steadily increasing numbers commented on by Homes has continued in the ten latest seasons as the five-year averages, based on Table 1, reveal. The figures (commencing with 1957/58 to 1961/62) are : 32; 55; 74; 82 and 105. While there were some marked fluctuations in the five seasons from 1972/73, there were consistent increases in each of the five latest winters. There is no correlation with either the national or the S.E. England indices.

The mid-winter counts do not always reflect the largest numbers occurring in the Area with peak numbers frequently occurring in March or early April (Oliver, 1978) but as the regular monthly counts do not extend to April and are frequently seriously incomplete in March, it is not practicable to extend the indices to cover this period.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* (Figure 2)

Whereas there was a very clear trend of increasing numbers in the first twenty-five years of the survey, numbers in the past ten seasons have, on average, remained much more constant, the relevant five-year means of the index, commencing at 1967/68 to 1971/72, being as follows : 85; 89 and 82. In recent years this species has been affected remarkably little by hard winters and, as with Pochard, the highest numbers occurred in 1979/80, again principally at Staines Reservoir. As noted elsewhere (Oliver, 1980) the numbers in winter are usually lower than at the time of the August wing moult and even the exceptional numbers of 1979/80 were barely higher than the normal moulting population (about 6,800). The London and national indices show no correlation, but the trends in the S.E. England figures are somewhat similar to those for London. In contrast to Pochard, all three sets of figures show a sizeable increase in 1979/80, though this was most marked in London.

SMEW *Mergus albellus*

For this species also, Homes published only maxima and as so few now winter in the London Area this practice has been continued. The sharp decline that commenced in the late 1950s has continued with only temporary respites in severe weather, so that this species is now insignificant as a component of the winter wildfowl population of the Area. It seems probable that the decline is a result of a higher proportion of the north-west European wintering population now remaining in Holland. No national indices are available for this species.

Table 1. Index of Mean (or in italics maxima) Winter Wildfowl Counts in the London Area, 1947/48 to 1981/82.

	Wigeon	Gadwall	Teal	Mallard	Shoveler	Pochard	Tufted Duck	Goldeneye	Smew	Goosander
1947/48	141	—	—	—	14	101	48	—	756	193
48/49	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
49/50	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	408	209
50/51	—	—	32	—	9	—	42	—	736	—
51/52	124	—	—	—	12	37	46	—	412	223
52/53	84	—	54	120	7	34	53	—	760	367
53/54	—	—	61	144	12	—	44	—	548	—
54/55	202	—	101	163	8	49	64	—	716	298
55/56	221	—	109	175	16	70	82	—	696	602
56/57	282	—	110	190	11	85	70	—	372	389
57/58	—	—	74	—	7	—	79	33	—	—
58/59	90	—	60	198	10	—	—	27	224	338
59/60	56	—	—	—	—	42	84	25	280	577
60/61	168	—	—	—	17	—	—	32	144	351
61/62	174	—	115	200	14	—	63	43	220	226
62/63	121	—	115	186	7	98	93	65	308	856
63/64	88	—	106	177	6	76	85	50	—	107
64/65	—	—	113	168	—	—	—	57	324	—
65/66	108	—	126	160	13	82	76	56	432	161
66/67	91	—	92	116	20	57	63	47	196	111
67/68	70	—	96	—	—	—	—	66	192	—
68/69	101	—	153	128	26	46	61	71	116	75
69/70	77	—	150	124	39	62	83	67	220	156
70/71	80	—	147	102	61	121	97	81	116	—
71/72	77	—	114	115	64	75	101	87	96	95
72/73	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
73/74	89	106	81	91	86	138	96	83	96	291
74/75	68	95	105	110	86	103	87	67	84	128
75/76	178	86	137	109	147	63	80	102	28	132
76/77	115	70	109	119	116	64	80	57	32	98
77/78	71	78	129	114	111	50	53	64	88	174
78/79	174	77	213	156	93	75	76	65	148	286
79/80	117	122	167	113	84	340	119	116	36	194
80/81	127	145	138	109	129	82	92	126	8	212
81/82	141	162	131	101	151	90	68	153	56	260

Table 2. Peak winter counts of wildfowl in the London Area (based on monthly wildfowl counts) and qualifying levels denoting national importance.

	Wigeon	Gadwall	Teal	Mallard	Shoveler	Pochar	Tufted Duck	Goldeneye	Smew	Goosander
1972/73	193	144	999	3,071	627	2,766	5,576	162	25	99†
73/74	182	207	823	2,229	641	3,327	5,772	134	24	208
74/75	121	176	1,020	3,131	671*	2,290	5,084	114	16	97
75/76	229	125	1,068	2,759	962	1,517	4,208	166	7	112†
76/77	156	123	962	3,134	580	1,330	3,303	121†	8	63†
77/78	207	115	1,055	3,100*	767	1,059	2,737	103	22	149
78/79	510	160	2,057	3,565	805	1,661	5,372	106†	37	292
79/80	264	185	1,542	2,457	612*	5,671	7,164	188	9	151
80/81	222	194	1,465	2,219	991	1,177	5,035	204†	2	156
81/82	323	242	1,315	2,989	946	2,161	3,815	248†	14	272
Average Level for national importance	305	179	1,487	2,866	824	2,346	4,824	170	17	204
	2,000	50**	1,000	4,000	90	500	600	150	—	50**

* autumn

† spring

** minimum permissible; represents over 1%.

Table 3. Alternative indices of Goldeneye counts in the London Area.

	<i>Index of maximum counts</i>	<i>Index of mean counts</i>		<i>Index of maximum counts</i>	<i>Index of mean counts</i>
1972/73	100	100	1977/78	64	57
73/74	83	86	78/79	65	70
74/75	67	75	79/80	116	93
75/76	102	106	80/81	126	110
76/77	57	69	81/82	153	128

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Very few Goosander occur in the London Area before December and for this species the index is, therefore, based upon the mean of the December to February counts. Whereas the index follows a similar pattern to that of Smew in the period covered by Homes, the ten latest seasons have seen the decline arrested and, in the last five winters reversed, though to a level of only about two-thirds of that occurring in the late 1950s. The five-year means of the index commencing in 1957/58 have been: 373; 309; 109; 150 and 225. Traditionally, larger numbers of this species have been associated with hard winters and this was particularly marked in 1955/56 and 1962/63, but although there were increases compared with the immediately preceding seasons in the severe weather of 1978/79 and 1981/82, these were to much more modest levels than in the earlier hard winters. There is little correlation with the S.E. England or national indices.

DISCUSSION

At a time when wildfowl and their habitat are increasingly threatened, it is remarkable that the numbers of ducks in the London Area have been maintained or increased in the period under review. Only Smew has shown a serious decline and Shoveler and Goldeneye have recorded remarkable increases. The more numerous species, while fluctuating, seem not to be in any immediate danger provided suitable reservoirs, or parts of them, are kept free from disturbance, especially from sailing.

The population of ducks in the London Area is of some importance nationally. The average of the peak counts for 1977/78 to 1981/82 are compared in table 2 with the qualifying levels denoting national importance (Salmon, 1982 (a)). A wetland is considered of national importance if it regularly holds at least 1% of the estimated wintering population of one species or subspecies (Prater, 1981). While the qualifying levels relate to individual sites rather than to a geographical region, it is perhaps reasonable to claim that if the London Area holds 5% or more of a national population, then it is of national significance for that species. On this criterion, the London Area is of national significance for Shoveler, Tufted Duck and Smew, and probably for Gadwall and Goosander as well. The Area is particularly important for Shoveler: the highest count in Britain in 1980/81 (Salmon, 1982 (b)) occurred at King George VI Reservoir (488 in November) and the maximum counts in each of the two latest seasons (Table 2) only just fell short of the qualifying level of 1,000 for a site of International importance.

The data presented here ignore the wildfowl population of the River Thames below London Bridge. This is appropriate as these birds almost

certainly form part of the population of the Thames Estuary proper; certainly the build-up of numbers there had no noticeable effect on the more inland waters covered by the regular monthly counts (Homes, 1976).

Given the importance of the London Area for wildfowl it is clearly essential that the regular counts are continued and as new sites can now be incorporated without impairing the consistency of the data, it is to be hoped that more waters will be covered in future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper and the underlying data owe their existence to the inspiration and foresight of the late Dick Homes and it is a pleasure to acknowledge here his help in first involving me in duck counts and, later, in organising them. Equally, the knowledge presented here has depended upon the enthusiasm of individual counters, many of whom have counted waters consistently for upwards of ten years. The helpful co-operation of the Thames Water Authority and other landowners is also acknowledged. David Salmon of the Wildfowl Trust kindly provided me with national data and commented on an earlier draft of this paper.

SUMMARY

The regular monthly wildfowl counts are now analysed by comparing waters counted in the same month in each of two consecutive years, using the formula: (count for season 2 \div count for season 1) \times index for season 1. The indices reveal sharply increasing numbers of Shoveler and Goldeneye and a drastic reduction in Smew. Other species have fluctuated without showing consistent long-term trends. A crude comparison of maximum counts in the years 1977/78 to 1981/82 with the criteria for national importance suggests that the London Area holds 5% or more of the national populations of Shoveler, Tufted Duck and Smew, and probably also of Gadwall and Goosander. The data exclude counts for the River Thames below London Bridge which are thought to relate to the populations of the Thames Estuary proper.

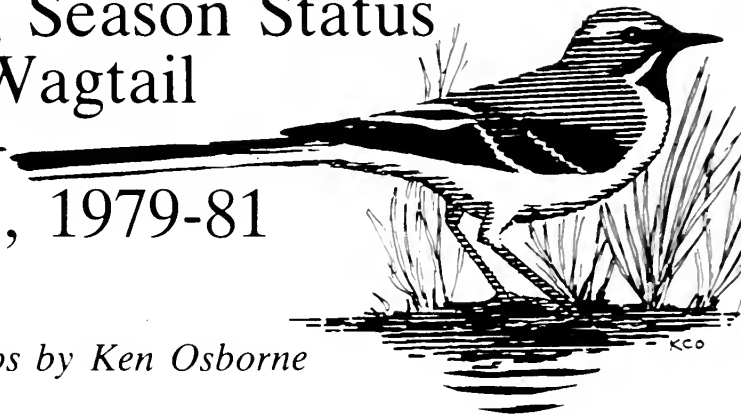
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The Breeding Season Status of the Grey Wagtail in the London Area, 1979-81

K. H. Palmer

with illustration and maps by Ken Osborne



INTRODUCTION

In analysing breeding data for the Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* submitted on nest record data cards for the BTO Nest Records Scheme, Dr. S. J. Tyler (1972) noted that all but four of the 699 nests reported were in rural areas, the remaining four being on or near urban sewage farms. While these results may be influenced by the distribution of participants in the Nest Records Scheme, there can be no doubt that today the Grey Wagtail is well established in the largest conurbation in the British Isles, extending well into the most densely built-up areas. The history of the Grey Wagtail's spread into London up to 1972 is already well documented (Homes, 1957; Montier, 1977). At the time of the 1968-72 Breeding Birds survey, the major concentrations were still in the more rural SW areas although there was already some evidence of isolated pockets of Grey Wagtails breeding in purely urban areas (for example around the Brent Reservoir). Subsequent records in the *London Bird Reports* suggest a continuation of this spread.

It was with the intention of monitoring and quantifying this recent colonisation of urban London that the LNHS Research Committee decided, as early as 1975, to launch an intensive investigation into the current status of the Grey Wagtail ten years on from the *Atlas*. The actual survey work was carried out during the three years 1979-81 and this paper reports on the results.

METHODS

From the beginning it was realised that to carry out an effective survey of all of London's many waterways (the primary breeding habitat of the Grey Wagtail) would require an extensive organisation of field workers. Such a survey could not just rely on casual reports since it was equally important to discover where Grey Wagtails were absent as it was to find out where they were breeding. The years preceding the survey were therefore devoted to enrolling a Task Force of volunteer helpers organised into 32 separate areas loosely based on 10km squares. In each area a local organiser was appointed whose job it was to enlist local help from the pool of volunteers and to disseminate instructions. While the setting up of this Task Force was motivated by the Grey Wagtail project, it was intended to make use of it for any major LNHS Research Project and indeed the first project in which the Task Force was involved was a survey of Pied Wagtail roosts during the winter of 1978/79 (Chandler, 1979).

Detailed and accurate waterway maps were drawn up for each area showing all potential habitat to be surveyed — rivers, canals, reservoirs, lakes, gravel pits and sewage farms. These were distributed to the Area Organisers together with instructions for the survey. Helpers were asked to

complete a Waterway Survey form for each stretch of water covered. These forms left space for a sketch map, details of the type of habitat and precise location of any Grey Wagtails located together with evidence of breeding. Breeding evidence was based on the same criteria as used in the national 1968–72 *Atlas* work (Sharrock, 1976), that is with each sighting classified as 'possible', 'probable' or 'proved', according to the birds' activity. One exception was that evidence of nest building was considered proof of breeding from the outset. Details of nest-sites were also requested. To establish absence of Grey Wagtails observers were encouraged to survey each stretch of waterway at least three times during any one season.

The first season (1979) was considered a pilot survey to test out the organisation and to obtain data to consolidate the waterway maps. The main survey took place in 1980 with an attempt to cover as much of the total waterways as possible while 1981 concentrated on filling in gaps and seeking possible breeding sites away from water. The survey period in each year ran from the beginning of April to the end of July.

Throughout the survey the emphasis was on discovering where Grey Wagtails could be found during the breeding season rather than trying to prove breeding or locate nest-sites. This was done to increase the effectiveness of the limited number of helpers (between 100 and 150) who were being asked to survey more than 1700km (1000 miles) of London's waterways. Observers were, however, asked to take special precautions to ignore probable passage birds.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

As could be expected in an undertaking of this magnitude, the coverage achieved varied widely in different areas from no coverage at all in one area (TL40), where a local organiser could not be found, to better than 95% coverage in six areas. This variation resulted from the non-uniform distribution of both the waterways themselves and the volunteer helpers available. The length of waterway contained in any one area varied from 8km (TQ35) to 109km (TL30/31). Overall 63.5% of all waterways were systematically surveyed and 184 separate Grey Wagtail sites located.

From an analysis of the 237 returned Waterway Survey forms a summary sheet for each area was compiled giving details of each Grey Wagtail site located — exact location, breeding status in each year, habitat, nest-site description and names of observers — together with a consolidated waterway map for the area showing (in red) the amount of water surveyed and (in green) the location of any Grey Wagtail sites found. These summary sheets will be deposited with the LNHS library to make them available for future research.

In order to provide data on breeding-site density, each of the rivers (and the lengths surveyed) was measured as accurately as possible. Lakes, gravel pits and reservoirs were measured as the extent of their perimeters. From these measurements, breeding density, in terms of number of sites per 10km of surveyed waterway, was calculated for each of the major river systems as well as for selected individual rivers.

From the habitat descriptions received, the relative numbers of Grey Wagtails occupying rural and urban sites were determined and further details of habitat preference analysed. Finally an analysis was made of nest-site location for each of the 43 nests located during the survey.

In order to compare the breeding distribution in the present survey (1979–81) to that of the *Atlas* (1968–72), results were consolidated by tetrad (2 × 2km square). The results of each of these analyses are presented and discussed in the following sections.

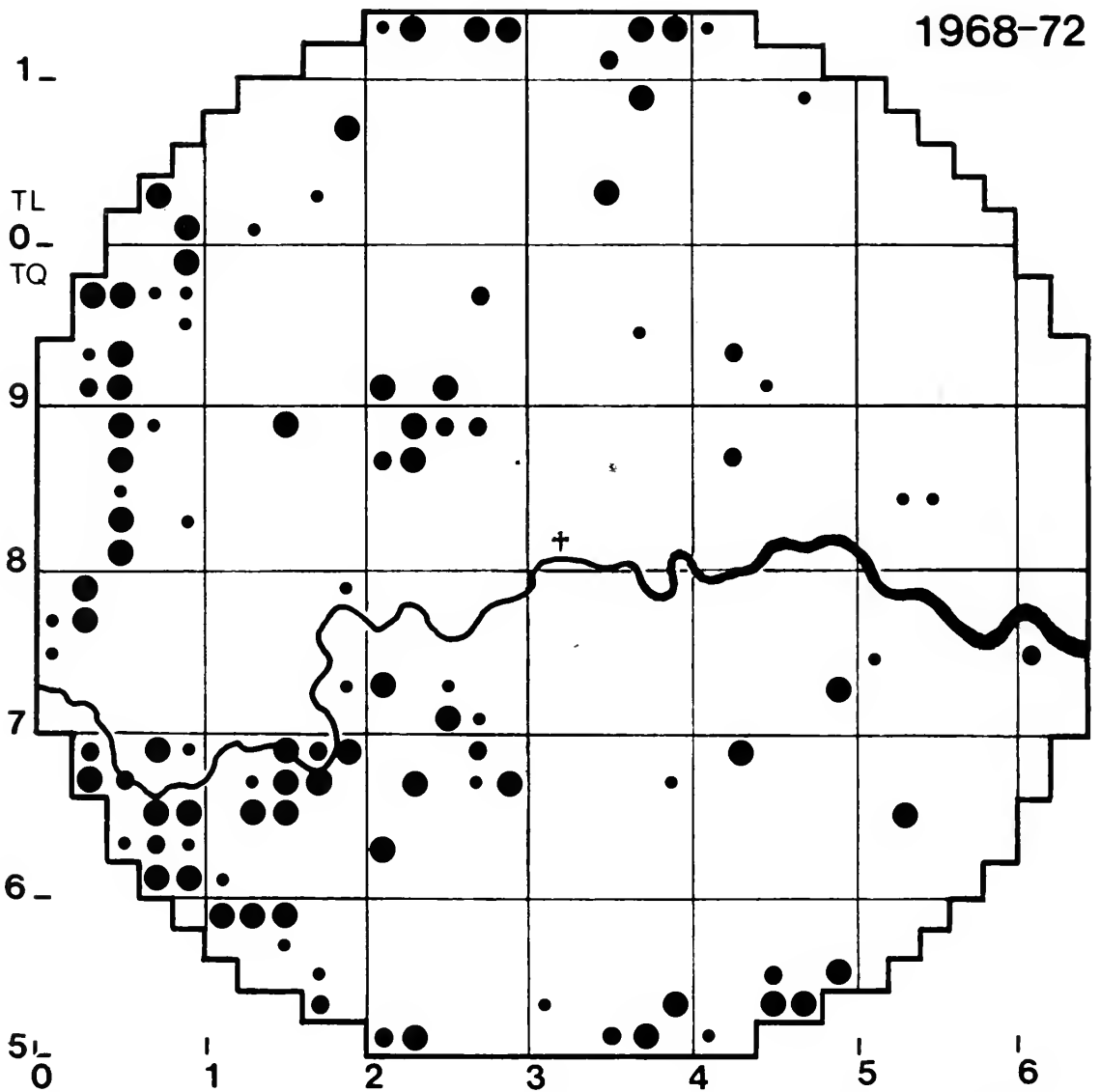


Fig 1. Grey Wagtail breeding distribution during the LNHS Atlas 1968-72. Tetrads are shown recording proven breeding (large dots), probable breeding (medium dots) and presence (small dots).

TETRAD ANALYSIS

Fig. 1 is a reproduction of the Grey Wagtail breeding distribution map (by tetrad) from the 1968-72 *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the London Area* (Montier, 1977). Fig. 2 shows the results of the 1979-81 survey presented in the same way. A casual comparison of these two maps immediately shows a marked increase in distribution from west to east, particularly along the rivers south of the Thames. North of the Thames there has been an extension

Table 1. Number of tetrads occupied by Grey Wagtails during the breeding season in the total LNHS area (Atlas and Current Survey).

	<i>Atlas</i> 1968-72	<i>Current</i> Survey 1979-81	% change
Proved	55	86	+56
Probable	18	30	+59*
Possible	34	21	
Total	107	137	+28

*proved + probable

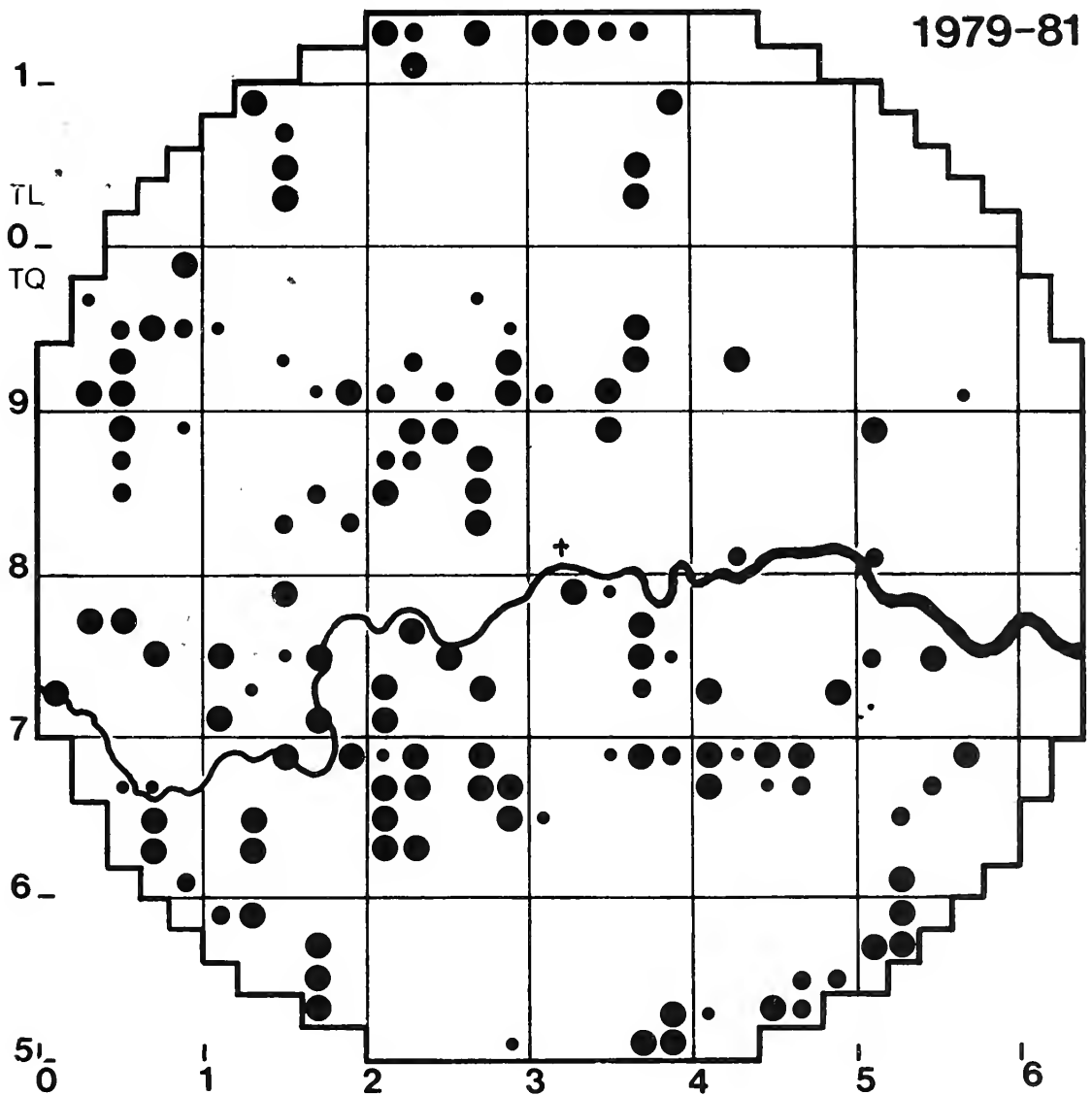


Fig 2. Grey Wagtail breeding-season distribution in the 1979-81 survey. Tetrads are shown recording proved breeding (large dots), probable breeding (medium dots) and presence (small dots).

towards the centre of London particularly along the Brent and Lea; but the Essex rivers in the NE remain poorly populated. The apparent decline in the lower Colne valley (where coverage was high — TQ 08) is probably genuine, but in the extreme SW (TQ 16) the apparent decline could be influenced by less good coverage in the present survey.

To quantify the magnitude of this increase in distribution, Table 1 shows the total number of tetrads in which Grey Wagtails were recorded during the breeding season for both the 1968-72 survey and the 1979-81 survey broken down into the three categories of proved, probable and possible breeding. Based on the total of all three categories the apparent increase in occupied tetrads is 28%. If the 'possible' records are excluded (the criteria for accepting these were probably more stringent in the present survey) then the increase in distribution could be as high as 59% between the ten years that separated the two surveys. Further comparisons with the *Atlas* results are all based on tetrads with proved or probable records only.

In Table 2 the change in distribution is compared on a quadrant basis. The four quadrants are defined by the intersection of the grid lines 30 (easting)

and 80 (northing). This table shows that the largest increase (164%) has occurred in the SE quadrant with the NE quadrant (129%) having the second highest increase. These two quadrants had the lowest numbers of occupied tetrads at the time of the *Atlas* survey. As might be expected the quadrant with the highest number of occupied tetrads at the time of the *Atlas*, the SW quadrant, showed the smallest percentage increase (20%).

Table 3 takes this analysis one stage further by comparing results both by quadrant and proximity to the centre of London. Proximity to London is defined at three levels; Inner zone as the four 10km squares surrounding the intersection of the quadrant lines (i.e. TQ 27, 28, 37, 38); Middle zone as the twelve 10km squares that surround the inner four squares; Outer zone as all the remaining outer squares (or parts thereof that lie within the LNHS boundary). On this basis the total number of tetrads contained within each zone is:

Inner	100
Middle	300
Outer	456

Table 2. Number of tetrads occupied by proved or probable breeding Grey Wagtails broken down by quadrant (Atlas and Current Survey).

	1968-72	1979-81	% change
SW	30	36	+ 20
NW	25	35	+ 40
SE	11	29	+164
NE	7	16	+129

Table 3. Number of tetrads occupied by proved or probable breeding Grey Wagtails broken down by quadrant and proximity to London (Atlas and Current Survey).

		1968-72	1979-81	% change
Inner Zone	SW	2	5	+150
	NW	5	8	+ 60
	SE	—	4	+
	NE	—	1	+
	Total	7	18	+157
Middle Zone	SW	11	19	+ 73
	NW	4	9	+125
	SE	2	9	+350
	NE	2	6	+200
	Total	19	43	+126
Outer Zone	SW	17	12	- 29
	NW	16	18	+ 13
	SE	9	16	+ 78
	NE	5	9	+ 80
	Total	47	55	+ 17

Table 3 shows that the highest percentage increase (157%) has occurred in the inner zone with a progressively smaller increase through to the outer zone. Two zonal quadrants (inner SE and inner NE) contained no occupied

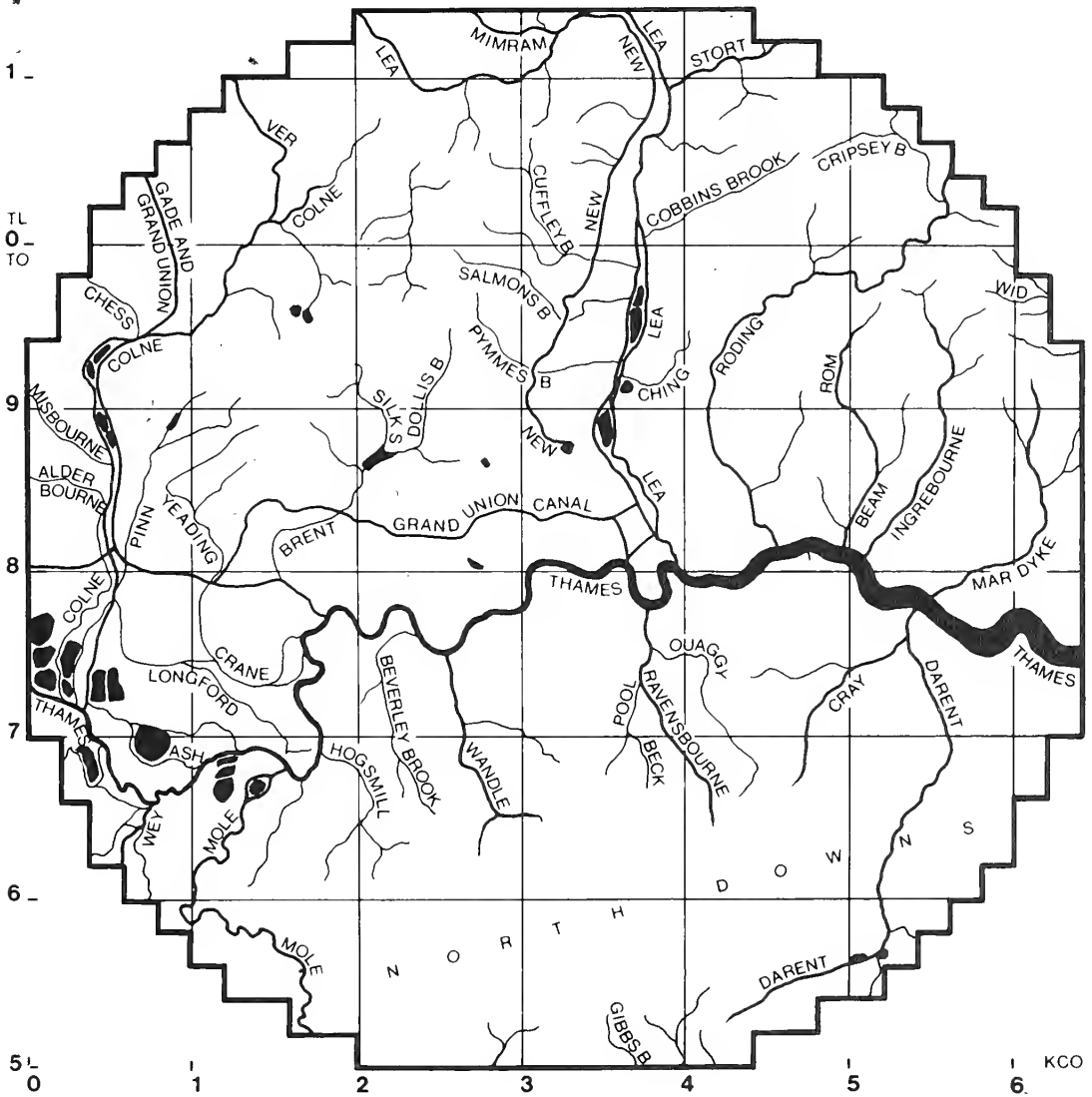


Fig 3. The main rivers and canals of the London Area. Principal streams are named but tributaries, reservoirs, lakes and gravel pits are shown simplified.

tetrads during the *Atlas* survey. In 1979-81 all zonal quadrants contained at least one occupied tetrad. Of the zonal quadrants occupied during the *Atlas* survey, the middle SE showed the highest percentage increase (350%). Only one zonal quadrant (outer SW) showed an apparent decrease, but, as previously remarked, this could have been influenced by lower coverage in 1979-81.

While it has been possible to illustrate the spread of the Grey Wagtail in terms of occupied tetrads, no such comparison can be made in terms of the total number of breeding sites since no attempt was made to obtain such data during the 1968-72 *Atlas* survey. The remainder of this paper, then, is concerned with documenting the situation recorded during the 1979-81 survey.

WATERWAY ANALYSIS

London has one major river, the Thames, flowing from west to east through its centre. Only in the extreme west of this area is the Thames sufficiently narrow to offer a suitable breeding habitat for Grey Wagtails. Below London the river broadens to a maximum width of more than 1km around Swanscombe in the extreme east of the Area. Flowing into the Thames are fifteen river systems, seven from the south and eight from the north. The only other rivers to intersect the LNHS recording area are tributaries of the Eden in the south and parts of the river Wid in the north-east which flows eventually to the Blackwater on the Essex coast. These rivers, however, represent only four per cent of London's total river system. In addition to the rivers there are canals. The Grand Union Canal enters the area from the north down the Gade/Colne valley, where it is often closely interlinked with the rivers themselves, and reaches the Thames at Brentford. A branch leads from Southall through Paddington and Regent's Park to the Thames at Limehouse. London has a great many lakes and gravel pits as well as a number of major reservoirs. These are concentrated in the west and in the Lea valley. Other older reservoirs, such as the Brent, supply the canals.

The total waterway system which formed the subject of the 1979-81 Grey Wagtail survey is illustrated in Fig. 3. Besides showing the main rivers and canals, this map also depicts some of the principal areas of open water.

Apart from the Darent and the Mole, the rivers to the south of the Thames, influenced by an arm of the North Downs which spreads across from Buckland in Surrey to Riverhead in Kent, tend to be shorter and faster flowing than those to the north. Many of these southern rivers, notably the Hogsmill, Wandle and Ravensbourne run for most of their length through densely populated areas. North of the Thames stretches of the Crane and Brent as well as the lower reaches of the Lea and Roding flow through highly industrialised areas but further north the rivers tend to meander sluggishly through flat open country particularly in the north-east where the numerous side branches often degenerate into dried-up ditches during the summer.

In order to derive data from which to estimate the density of Grey Wagtail sites, it was necessary to measure the river systems shown in Fig. 3. This was done from the accurately drawn individual waterway maps for each of the 32 recording areas using a map-measurer. The final measurements are not claimed to be 'official' lengths of rivers since much subjective judgement had to be exercised on whether to include or exclude many of the smallest tributaries. The problem was further compounded by the knowledge that certain sections of the rivers, particularly close to the centre of London, run underground. In general the policy was to exclude from the measurement those tributaries reported by the area organisers to be dry in summer and sections known to run underground. Otherwise all rivers shown on the 1:50000 Ordnance Survey maps were included in the measurements, except in the Lea Valley and Colne Valley where numerous rivers, man-made channels and small ditches run parallel to each other, often very close together. To avoid biasing the calculation of sites per 10km of river length these parallel streams have sometimes been grouped into a single river to ensure that each measured river is sufficiently isolated from its neighbours to represent a distinct waterway system. The apparently isolated complex of streams between Hatfield and Potters Bar (squares TL20, TQ29) which include the Mimmshall Brook and Catherine Bourne is reputed to flow through swallow holes into the Lea in summer and spill its surplus water into the Colne in winter. For the purposes of this survey it has been included into the Lea system.

Measurement of the Grand Union Canal is based on its total length even where it intertwines or runs side by side with other rivers (e.g. the

Gade/Colne). Calculation of site density for the canal is, however, confined to the branch which with its basically W-E course is distinctly isolated from other river systems. Thus all Grey Wagtail sites for the Colne/Gade valleys have been attributed to those rivers and not to the Grand Union Canal.

Waterway length associated with reservoirs, lakes and gravel pits has been measured as the perimeter of these waters except where they are long and narrow when a single linear measurement has been taken.

In each area measurements have been taken of both the total waterway length and the length of waterway that has been properly surveyed. The overall results of these measurements are summarized in Table 4.

This table shows that the total length of waterway (subject to the foregoing criteria) in the LNHS recording area is 1711km (1064 miles) of which 1363km are rivers and canals. Out of this total, 1086km were properly surveyed for

Table 4. Total length of waterway in the LNHS Area and the amount that was systematically surveyed.

	<i>Total length</i>	<i>Length surveyed</i>	<i>% coverage</i>
Rivers/canals			
km	1363	854	62.7
miles	847	531	
Lakes/Gravel Pits/Reservoirs*			
km	348	232	66.7
miles	217	145	
Total waterway			
km	1711	1086	63.5
miles	1064	676	

*measured as lengths of perimeters

Grey Wagtails during 1979-81 representing an overall coverage of 63.5%. While this level of coverage may be rather lower than was hoped for when the project was inaugurated, the magnitude of the task was not fully appreciated at the time. To survey over 1000km of waterway in three seasons is, nevertheless, no small achievement and a tribute to the enthusiasm of all field workers who participated in the project.

The appendix gives two tables which break down the total waterway firstly by major river systems (Table 5) and then by selected individual rivers (Table 6). Table 5 shows first the seven river systems south of the Thames (from E to W) and then the eight north of the Thames (again from E to W). Among these eight the Crane, Duke of Northumberland's River and the Longford River have been grouped as a single system although they each have separate outflows into the Thames.

For each river system three measurements are given in Table 5. The first shows the total length of the major river within each system, ignoring any tributaries. Apart from the Thames (104.3km) the longest rivers within the LNHS area are the Lea (60.2km) and the Colne (49.9km). The second column gives the total length of all rivers associated with each system. Here the Lea system with its many tributaries (310km) stands out well ahead of its nearest rivals, the Colne (182.8km) and the Roding (116.8km). The third column shows the total length of each river system that was surveyed in 1979-81. A comparison of columns two and three shows that the river

systems best covered during the survey were the Brent/Dollis Brook system (95.9%), the Ingrebourne (84.1%) and the Darent (80.0%) while the river system receiving least attention was the Mar Dyke (17.6%).

Table 6 gives similar measurements for individual rivers rather than river systems. Only the more significant rivers (with respect to Grey Wagtail sites) are shown. Discrepancies between measurements shown in column one of Tables 5,6 (Ravensbourne, Wandle, Beverley Brook) are due to inclusion in Table 6 of branches that occur near the source of the river. Table 6 includes four rivers that were fully surveyed (Mimram, Brent/Dollis Brook, Silk Stream and Ver).

SITE DENSITY

In this analysis a site is defined as any distinct location at which Grey Wagtails were recorded during the breeding season in any of the three survey years. When reported sightings were in close proximity but outside expected territorial limits each case has been judged independently. While this might be assumed to be a difficult judgement to make, in fact there were surprisingly few cases where the decision was in doubt. This was helped by the Grey Wagtail's fidelity to the same breeding territory from year to year (37% of reported sites contained sightings in more than one year — roughly commensurate with the frequency with which the same site was visited in more than one year). In many cases of close proximity there was sufficient evidence to prove that the birds could not belong to the same breeding pair (as, for instance, when a pair was watched feeding young on one side of a bridge along Mutton Brook a second male was singing on the other side of the bridge). In general, where such evidence was lacking, closely related sightings have been classified as a single site. Perhaps the biggest potential source of error can be caused by dispersal of young from an earlier brood. Special care has been taken in judging late-season isolated records of young birds.

Based on this definition of a site the two tables in the appendix give the total number of sites for each river system (Table 5) and for the selected individual rivers (Table 6). From these figures the site densities, in terms of number of sites per 10km of surveyed waterway can be calculated and are given in each table.

Inspection of Table 5 shows that site density is higher for the river systems south of the Thames (averaging 5.3 sites per 10km) than for those north of the Thames (1.5 sites per 10km). The river systems with the highest site densities are the Ravensbourne (8.3 sites per 10km) and the Hogsmill (8.2 per 10km) whereas the Colne contains the highest total number of sites (28).

Looking at individual rivers (Table 6), the Ravensbourne is seen to have a surprisingly high density of sites (12.3 per 10km of surveyed length). This implies a site separation, based on eight sites, of less than a kilometre. This is also one of the more urban of London's rivers, 71% of its length running through built-up areas. The river Cray, also in the SE, has the second highest density (8.2 sites per 10km).

In judging site density, some bias must be expected in favour of rivers that were less well surveyed. This could be caused both by local knowledge of traditional sites (all of which can be assumed to have been included in the survey) and by a natural tendency to pay more attention to river stretches most obviously suitable for Grey Wagtails. Neither of these conditions, however, applied in the case of the Ravensbourne where none of the eight sites had been previously reported and the low coverage (30.8%) was limited only by problems of access. To counter this bias, which was recognised at the outset, field workers were urged throughout the survey to find out and report

where Grey Wagtails were absent. As testimony to at least the partial success of this policy 34% of the Waterway Survey forms returned reported no Grey Wagtails.

To illustrate the most extreme effect this bias could have (i.e. assuming that the unsurveyed river stretches contained no Grey Wagtail sites), the final column of Table 6 shows site density calculated as sites per 10km of total river length. This, of course, gives a rather different picture with the highest site densities being on the Wey (6.6) and the Ver (6.5), while the Ravensbourne is reduced to 3.8 sites per 10km of river length. Columns 4/5 of Table 6 between them span the range of likely site densities for each river. Almost certainly the true values lie closer to those in column 4 than to those in column 5 but this probably varies for different rivers. Only for those rivers with high coverage can the site density be quoted with confidence.

Before leaving the question of site density it is worth noting (Table 5) that the tributaries of the Eden (Gibbs Brook, Oxted Stream) in the South of the area held a well-established population (density 3.6) including traditional sites that represent some of the earliest colonisation of the London Area (Homes, 1957). Only eight per cent of the total sites were associated with open water (lakes, gravel pits, reservoirs) at a density of only 0.65 sites per 10km of perimeter length, much below the average for the river systems. Only four sites were reported in locations not directly connected with waterways.

HABITAT PREFERENCE

While the prime purpose of this survey was to plot the distribution of London's Grey Wagtails during the breeding season, field workers were also asked to record the type of habitat for each stretch of water surveyed and in particular wherever Grey Wagtails were located. Several area organisers returned detailed habitat maps of all the waters in their area enabling a comparison to be made between habitat types where Grey Wagtails were present and where they were absent. No clear picture, however, emerges from this comparison and it seems likely that site preference is determined more by other factors such as food supply, suitable nest-sites, availability of feeding sites, disturbance by the public etc. No attempt was made to properly investigate such factors during the present survey.

London has no wide, rushing, rocky mountain streams typical of the haunts of the Grey Wagtail in its main strongholds in the north and west of the British Isles. In the outer part of the Area, London's waterways are more typical of many southern lowland streams flowing through woods and meadows but occasionally emulating their more hilly counterparts as they speed down weirs or mill-races or flow out from lakes and locks. Some have pebbly beds with protruding stones and shingly edges and are fast-flowing. Others are reed-fringed and sluggish, with muddy banks. In the more central urban areas they are often very narrow (1-3 metres across) and are frequently guided through man-made concrete channels.

Of the 184 Grey Wagtail sites reported, habitat descriptions (in varying degrees of detail) were recorded for 174 sites. Of these, 114 were in open areas (i.e. not immediately surrounded by buildings), the remaining 60 being in built-up areas. Table 7 shows a finer breakdown of these two broad categories. Of the 114 open-area sites, 35 were in urban and suburban parks or gardens — relatively small open spaces in a basically built-up area. Of the truly rural sites 31 were surrounded by fields and 21 by woodland. The 15 open water sites can be further subdivided into eight on lakes or ponds, four on gravel pits and three on major reservoirs. Of the built-up sites, there were rather more in industrial areas (33) than in residential areas (27).

Table 7. Habitat preference for 174 sites.

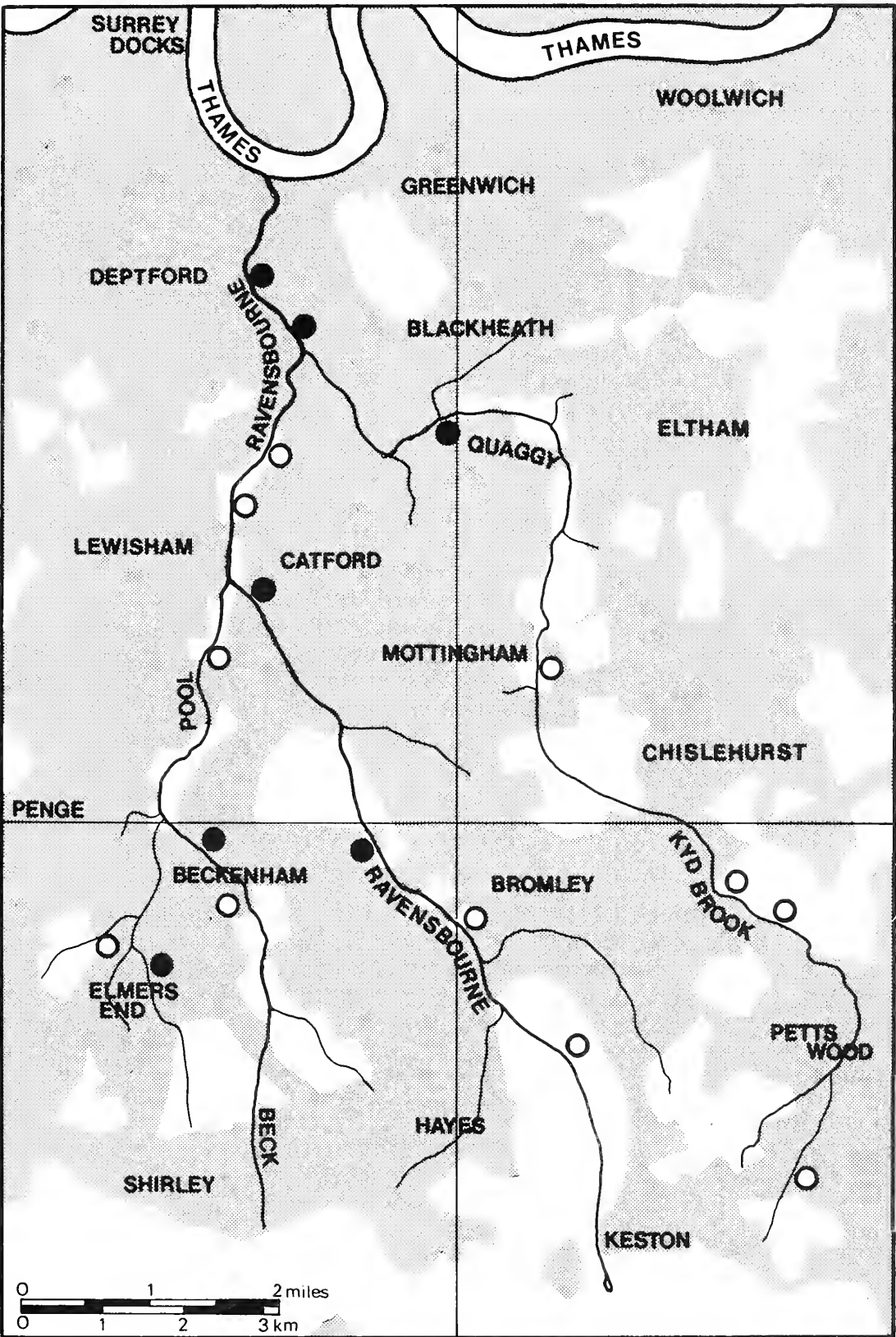
		<i>No. of sites</i>
Open areas	Woods	21
	Fields	31
	Gardens/Parks	35
	Sewage farms	6
	Watercress beds	3
	Wasteland	3
	Open water	15
	Total	114
Built-up areas	Industrial	33
	Residential	27
	Total	60

Although access to river stretches in built-up areas was more difficult than in open areas, a number of observers reported the presence of Grey Wagtails among buildings even where they were absent in neighbouring open spaces (parks or gardens). To illustrate this, Fig. 4 shows the total Ravensbourne river system with the built-up areas shaded and Grey Wagtail sites marked (open circles for open spaces, solid circles for built-up areas). In this river system only 22% of the length surveyed was in built-up areas yet this contained 35% of the located sites. Where the Ravensbourne flows for more than a kilometre through Beckenham Place Park, no wagtails were located during the breeding season (although they occur here on passage and in winter). But within a few hundred metres to the south of the park a pair was located where the river flows among houses. That the Grey Wagtail is not deterred by human activities is illustrated by the pair that could be watched gathering food for their young from the down platform of Lewisham Station in the heart of a densely built-up area. Observers on the Wandle reported a similar picture to the Ravensbourne, with the Grey Wagtails showing a marked affinity for the presence of industrial buildings, often in preference to nearby public open spaces.

Table 8. Neighbouring features mentioned in site descriptions.

	<i>No. of references</i>
Bridges	42
Weirs	31
Locks	4
Mills	13
Concrete culverts	22
Watercress beds	5

In describing site habitat the submitted reports often drew attention to the presence of nearby features such as weirs, bridges etc. that could have influenced the Grey Wagtail's choice of location. A selection of these



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Fig 4. The River Ravensbourne and its tributaries. Grey Wagtail sites in the 1979-81 survey are shown with solid dots in built-up sections of stream and open dots for more rural habitats. The grey background tone broadly indicates urban development. All sections of river are shown even where they flow underground.

features is given in Table 8 which also shows the number of times each feature is referred to in the habitat description of a site. In studying this table it should be borne in mind that more than one feature was frequently mentioned for a single site. The data should not be interpreted as being indicative of the absolute number of sites associated with each feature since field-workers were not specifically asked to provide such data. Proper interpretation of these data would require knowledge of the 'feature-density' throughout London's waterways. It seems clear, however, that weirs and mill-races are particularly favoured as are watercress beds, all providing suitable feeding areas, while the man-made concrete culverts often allow the wagtails a good feeding edge close to the water. Bridges are probably more important in providing potential nest sites but the high occurrence of this feature in Table 8 should be treated with caution. 'Bridge density' in London is much higher than Grey Wagtail site density (the Ravensbourne system is crossed by at least 122 road/rail bridges — 21 per 10km) and any breeding pair would not find it easy to avoid the proximity of some kind of structure spanning its territorial stretch of river. In at least one case (already quoted) there is evidence that a bridge can act as a territorial boundary.

Comments on the speed of the water flow were included in 42 site descriptions. This was described as fast in 26 cases (62%) and slow or sluggish in the remaining 16.

Table 9. Locations of 43 nests.

	<i>No. of sites</i>	<i>%</i>
Bridges	20	46.5
River banks	9	20.9
Walls	6	14.0
Buildings	5	11.6
On ground	3	7.0

NEST SITES

Nest-site descriptions were received for 43 nests and are summarized in Table 9. Of these 46.5% were on or under bridges — more than twice as many as the next most favoured site (river banks). Only three nests were found on the ground one at the base of a hawthorn bush and two among tree roots. The actual situation of 31 nests is shown in Table 10. By far the most popular sites were holes in brickwork either on bridges or on brick-lined banks.

Table 10. Situations of 31 nests.

	<i>No. of nests</i>
Hole in brickwork	12
Hole in concrete	3
In ivy	3
In other vegetation	2
Iron plates/girders	2
On ledge	2
In pipe	2
Tree roots	2
Base of hawthorn bush	1
Man-made hole	1
Wooden hut	1

The height above water level (excluding the three nests built on the ground) varied from 0.6m to 3.0m with a mean of 1.74m for seven cases where the height was recorded.

DISCUSSION

There can be little doubt that over the last ten years there has been a substantial increase in the distribution of the Grey Wagtail as a breeding species in London and that this has been particularly evident in the more central, built-up areas. The present survey deliberately set out to obtain facts both on the extent of this increase and on the situation as it is today rather than to gather evidence that might help to answer why this increase has occurred. In this respect the 1979-81 survey has aimed to provide a base point from which further research might evolve. Dr. S. J. Tyler (1970) in her study of Grey Wagtails on the streams of the New Forest found more pairs on the base rich streams in the south than on the relatively more base deficient streams of the north. A careful comparison of the surface geology and biology of London's rivers might help to explain why two superficially similar rivers as, say, the Ravensbourne to the south and the Roding to the north should support such clearly different numbers of Grey Wagtails — or will the Roding be as densely colonised in another ten years?

Further research might also help to build confidence in the results of the present survey, the conclusions from which are based on a total waterway coverage of 63.5%. Thus a concentrated survey of a single river such as the Ravensbourne would establish whether site density is closer to that calculated on the basis of length surveyed or on the basis of total length. Are there actually 18 unreported sites on this river as required if the density of 12.3 sites per 10km is maintained along its total length?

It is pertinent to consider whether the present survey achieved its aims and whether the methods chosen were appropriate to fulfilling these aims. There seems little doubt that a clear picture has emerged of the way in which the Grey Wagtail has extended its range during the decade following the *Atlas* Survey. Recording this on the basis of occupied tetrads removes much of the loss of detail occasioned by difficulties in gaining access to rivers where they flow through private property. But have we discovered which of London's rivers are most favoured by Grey Wagtails — an essential pre-requisite to enquiring into why this should be so? Here the uneven coverage for different rivers must leave some uncertainty. Unfortunately it is always more difficult to obtain negative than positive data and perhaps too much emphasis was placed on following up casual reports from observers not involved in the survey — each of which tends to introduce a bias towards too high a site density. Nevertheless these risks were all well recognised at the outset and every precaution taken to minimise their effect.

In spite of the overall uncertainty a very large amount of data has been obtained which allows confident comparisons to be made in well surveyed areas on a more local basis. Thus in the north-west the rivers in the St. Albans area (the Ver and the Colne) were both intensively surveyed along almost their entire length within the 10km square TL10. All seven Grey Wagtail sites were on the river Ver and none was found on this part of the Colne. It is possible to be equally confident that the Grey Wagtail has not yet colonised the Essex rivers east of the Lea to any significant extent where observers repeatedly searched more than 100km of the Roding, Beam/Rom and Ingrebourne discovering only five sites. Negative results such as these were among the most important to the aims of the survey although least rewarding to those carrying it out. Space cannot permit a more detailed discussion of many of these well surveyed local areas but the data will be kept on record.

Finally how well do we know the number of pairs of Grey Wagtails that now breed in the LNHS recording area? Grey Wagtail numbers are known to decline after a severe winter but often recover quickly in the following two to three years. During the survey years the most severe winter occurred in 1978/79 immediately preceding the survey period. The BTO Waterways Bird Survey, started in 1974, has enabled a national index for riparian species to be calculated on an annual basis. In the years preceding the present survey the index for the Grey Wagtail remained relatively constant with its highest value in 1976 (Marchant and Hyde, 1979). Following the cold winter of 1978/79 the Grey Wagtail index showed a significant decrease of 33% (Marchant and Hyde, 1980) and did not significantly recover during the following two seasons (Taylor and Marchant, 1981 and 1982). While the results of the present survey suggest that recovery in London may have been more marked than the national average, it is, at least, unlikely that numbers declined over the three years 1979-81. This is supported by only one report being received of a site being deserted in a year subsequent to its first discovery, and that due to habitat destruction. Although the maximum number of sites at which breeding was proved in any one year was 55 (1980 and 1981) it would seem safe to take the minimum number of breeding pairs in the final season (1981) as the total number of sites at which breeding was proved in all three years (106). Many of the 1980 sites were deliberately not revisited in 1981 — a year in which emphasis was on filling in gaps in coverage. If the sites at which 'probable' breeding was recorded are included (49) this gives a probable minimum estimate of 154 breeding pairs. To get an idea of the maximum breeding population it is necessary to predict the number of undiscovered pairs along the 625km of unsurveyed waterway. Calculating this on the basis of each river system separately (under the assumption of constant site density and 84% of sites representing probable breeding) yields a maximum of 268 breeding pairs. For reasons already discussed this number is almost certainly too high but it would be surprising if there were less than 200 pairs of Grey Wagtails breeding in the LNHS Area in the final year of the survey period.

SUMMARY

A three year survey of London's waterways in 1979-81 has revealed a marked increase in the distribution of the Grey Wagtail since the Breeding Atlas ten years earlier. The increase has occurred primarily in the more urban areas particularly south of the Thames. Calculation of site densities for all of London's river systems shows that these southern rivers are generally more favoured than those to the north of the Thames and that the Grey Wagtail is still largely absent from the north-east. Data on habitat preference is presented which illustrates that in London the Grey Wagtail has become accustomed to living among buildings. Preferred nest-sites are on or under bridges most usually in holes in brickwork.

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APPENDIX

Tables 5 and 6 give data on the extent of London's major waterways both for total river systems (Table 5) and for selected individual rivers (Table 6). Also shown is the amount of waterway surveyed and the density, in terms of sites per 10km, of Grey Wagtails located. To understand the difference between the two tables reference can be made to Fig. 4 which illustrates the total Ravensbourne river system. In Table 5 the measurement of all waterways on the map (excluding sections known to run underground) is given in column 2 (58.6km), while the length of the main river course (15.8km) is that of the river Ravensbourne from the Thames at Deptford to Keston — ignoring all side branches. The total river system has 18 Grey Wagtail sites. In Table 6, three individual rivers forming part of the total river system are shown separately. The Ravensbourne itself, this time including the side branches at Bromley and Hayes, measures 21.1km and has eight Grey Wagtail sites. The Quaggy/Kyd Brook measures 20.4km and has five sites. The Pool/Beck measures 17.1km and has three sites. The two sites on the side ditches around Elmers End are not included in Table 5.

Table 5. Lengths and Grey Wagtail site densities for major river systems (and data for other sites).

	<i>Length of main river course</i>	<i>Total length</i>	<i>Total length surveyed</i>	<i>No. of Grey Wagtail Sites</i>	<i>Sites per 10km of surveyed length</i>
	km	km	km		
Thames	104.3	104.3	72.3	4	0.55
South					
Darent	36.5	76.0	60.8	21	3.45
Ravensbourne	15.8	58.6	21.8	18	8.26
Wandle	14.7	22.5	14.7	9	6.12
Beverley Brook	12.7	18.5	13.1	7	5.34
Hogsmill	8.6	19.6	7.3	6	8.22
Mole	31.1	39.6	14.8	9	6.08
Wey	6.1	17.6	8.3	4	4.82
North					
Mar Dyke	16.8	47.7	8.4	—	—
Ingrebourne	12.3	39.0	32.8	2	0.61
Beam/Rom	13.9	32.4	22.1	1	0.45
Roding	41.0	116.8	53.4	2	0.37
Lea	60.2	310.8	218.6	21	0.96
Brent/Dollis Brook	30.8	56.4	54.1	17	3.14
Crane/Yeading Brook	28.2	57.3	26.6	7	2.63
Colne	49.9	182.8	114.6	28	2.44
Minor rivers		18.7	7.3	1	1.37
Eden (minor tributaries)		39.0	16.6	6	3.61
Wid		17.2	17.2	—	—
Grand Union Canal	75.7	79.5	60.4	2	0.63*
Lakes/GP/Reservoirs		348.2	232.4	15	0.65
Non-water sites				4	

*based on 31.6km surveyed away from Colne/Gade (see text)

Table 6. Lengths and Grey Wagtail site densities for selected individual rivers.

	<i>Total length</i>	<i>Total length surveyed</i>	<i>No. of Grey Wagtail Sites</i>	<i>Sites per 10km of surveyed length</i>	<i>Sites per 10km of total length</i>
	km	km			
Darent	36.5	32.1	8	2.49	2.19
Cray	12.6	8.5	7	8.24	5.56
Ravensbourne	21.1	6.5	8	12.31	3.79
Quaggy/Kyd Brook	20.4	8.0	5	6.25	2.45
Pool/Beck	17.1	7.3	3	4.11	1.75
Wandle	15.5	14.4	9	6.25	5.81
Beverley Brook	13.7	10.3	6	5.83	4.38
Pyl Brook	4.8	2.8	1	3.57	2.08
Hogsmill	8.6	6.8	5	7.35	5.81
Mole	31.1	13.7	8	5.84	2.57
Wey	6.1	5.1	4	7.84	6.56
Lea	60.2	57.0	10	1.75	1.66
Pymmes Brook	22.0	16.0	4	2.50	1.82
Mimram	5.4	5.4	2	3.70	3.70
Brent/Dollis Brook	30.8	30.8	10	3.25	3.25
Silk Stream	7.4	7.4	4	5.41	5.41
Crane/Yeading Brook	28.2	19.3	3	1.55	1.06
Colne	49.9	40.1	12	2.99	2.40
Colnebrook	13.7	7.9	2	2.53	1.46
Chess	5.2	4.9	2	4.08	3.85
Gade	11.3	7.3	4	5.48	3.54
Ver	10.8	10.8	7	6.48	6.48

Ringling Report for 1982

J. D. Hook

As in recent years the request to ringing groups and individual ringers to submit their outstanding recoveries and controls met with a good response and included several interesting 1981 returns which were received too late for inclusion in the Ringling Report for that year. Other data submitted showed that several studies are at present being carried out on a variety of species including Tufted Duck, Sedge and Reed Warbler and Greenfinch. It is hoped that, on completion, papers will be submitted for publication.

SELECTED LATE RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS 1981

Included in the late 1981 recoveries was a Teal ringed at Rye Meads, Herts on Jan. 18th 1981 and shot near Salekhard, Yamel-Nenets, USSR. on June 6th, 4063km to the north-east. Four Tufted Duck, three of which were shot and the other found dead, all clearly confirm that many of those wintering in the Royal Parks in central London breed in Finland, Sweden and Northern Russia; another ringed as a duckling at Rye Meads on Aug. 14th was shot at Rennes, Vilaine, France on Dec. 20th, 428km south. Other 1981 recoveries include a Common Tern, ringed before it was fully fledged at Rye Meads on June 6th 1980 and 'found' at Kayar, Senegal on Dec. 6th, 4379km south. A Kingfisher ringed as a juvenile at Rye Meads on July 4th was controlled at Vale Marais, Guernsey, C.I. on Oct. 18th, 310km south-west. A Song Thrush ringed at the same locality on Apr. 25th was killed at Calabria, Italy on Dec. 27th, 1949km to the south-east. An interesting Blackcap was a bird ringed at Clarbrough, Notts. on Nov., 15th 1980 and controlled at Kempton Park, Middx., on Nov. 21st, perhaps wintering in England in both years. As so few Greenfinches ringed at inland sites are recovered on the Continent, one ringed at the Queen Mary Res., on July 25th and found dead or dying at St Jean des Champs, Manche, northern France on Dec. 4th is worth mentioning.

RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS 1982

Even allowing for the normally high recovery-rate for ringed ducks, it is unusual for a ringing group to report that the only Pintail ringed by them has been recovered. This was a bird ringed at Rainham Marsh, Essex on Jan. 31st 1981 and shot at Hojer, Jylland, Denmark on Sept. 30th, 683km north-east. A male Shoveler ringed in St. James's Park on Jan. 26th 1980 was retrapped in Regent's Park on Jan. 7th, but whether the bird was a winter migrant and where it came from must be left to conjecture. No long distance recoveries of Tufted Duck were reported, the farthest being a male ringed in Hyde Park on Nov. 19th 1976 and trapped at Sjailland, Denmark on Oct. 30th, 620km north-east. Another, a male ringed at Walton Res., Surrey on Mar. 23rd 1975 was found dead at Markermeer, Ijsselmeer, Netherlands on Aug. 11th. An effort was made in August to catch young Tufted Ducks in Regent's Park, to determine whether those birds hatched and fledged in the park partake in a 'abmigration' (moving north-easterly in spring with birds that have wintered in the park) or whether they participate in the normal migration pattern of British birds (moving south in the winter months); 21 ducklings were ringed during the month.

An unexpected visitor to central London was a Water Rail that was trapped and ringed in a large aviary in St. James's Park on Mar. 17th. Recoveries of Moorhen and Coot showed that discarded fishing line was responsible for most of the recoveries; the farthest Coot recovery was a bird

ringed at Waddon Ponds, Surrey on Jan. 13th 1979 and controlled at Abberton Res., Essex on Feb. 27th; the bird was later found dead.

Wader recoveries include a juvenile Ringed Plover ringed at Rainham Marsh on Aug. 25th 1979 and controlled at Sidi Moussa, Eljadida, Morocco on Apr. 24th, 2200km south. Two Dunlin, both ringed at Dartford Marsh, Kent on Jan. 21st 1981, were recovered; one was controlled at Insel Langewerder, Wismar, German D.R., on July 29th, 811km east and the other was 'found' at Ainazi, Limbazi, Latvia, USSR. on Sept. 15th, 1703km to the north-east. A Dunlin and a Redshank retrapped at Swanscombe Marsh, Kent on Mar. 6th had both been ringed at the same locality in 1971. There were no foreign recoveries of Redshank reported, the farthest being ringed at Swanscombe Marsh on Mar. 1st 1980 which was found dead (fishing line) at Hellmoor Loch, Hawick, Scotland on June 11th, 494km north-west.

There were seven foreign recoveries of Black-headed Gulls including one ringed at Littlebrook, Kent on Dec. 29th 1970, with a longevity of over 11½ years. Three were recovered in the Netherlands: the others in Denmark, German D.R., German F.R., and Sweden. Another found dead at Staines Res., Middx., on Sept. 11th had been ringed as a nestling at Godnowa, Milicz, Wroclaw, Poland on June 13th 1972, 1234km east.

A Swift ringed at Beddington S.F., Surrey on July 13th 1977 was controlled at Hatfield, Herts., on May 27th and two others ringed in the same year at Maple Cross S.F., were retrapped locally. A Kingfisher ringed at Beddington S.F., on Nov. 8th 1981 was controlled at Ongar, Essex on Apr. 14th and a Great Spotted Woodpecker controlled locally by the Hershams R.G. had been ringed 8 years and 102 days previously.

The number of hirundine recoveries was surprisingly small. No foreign recoveries were reported, although a Sand Martin ringed at Yeoveney G.P., Wraybury, Bucks., on July 3rd 1981 was well under way when it was controlled at Grouville Marsh, Jersey, C.I. on August 23rd, 273km south-west. Two Swallows both ringed in Yorkshire, one as a juvenile at Barnsley and the other when a nestling at Wetherby was controlled at Rye Meads and West Thurrock, Essex respectively. Inter-site movements of juvenile Yellow Wagtails during the dispersal and passage period included two ringed at Rye Meads on Aug. 6th and controlled at Bedfont Quarry, Middx., one on Aug. 30th and the other on Sept. 2nd; another ringed at Bedfont Quarry on Sept. 2nd was controlled at Farlington Marshes, Hants., on Sept. 14th.

One of the outstanding controls of the year was a Stonechat trapped at the Surrey Docks on Mar. 7th which had been ringed in October 1979 at Huesca, Spain 1054km south. This is the first British recovery of a foreign ringed Stonechat. There are more than 20 recoveries of British ringed Stonechats, chiefly from Spain with others in Belgium, France, Portugal and Algeria which indicates a northerly winter range of the British race *Saxicola torquata hibernans* compared to the Continental race *S.t. rubicola* which winters mainly in North Africa.

Very few foreign recoveries of Blackbird were reported, the farthest being a female ringed at Beddington S.F., on Dec. 14th 1981 which was found freshly dead on Blido Island, Stockholm, Sweden on May 27th, 1505km north-east. A male ringed at the Queen Mary Res., on Oct. 22nd 1977 was found dead at Wakendorf, Hamburg, German F.R., 751km east. Another ringed at Littlebrook in October 1974 was retrapped at the same locality in April. Song Thrush recoveries appeared to be comparatively few in number, the only recovery of over 50km being a bird ringed at Rye Meads on Oct. 31st 1981 which was found dead at Vale, Guernsey, C.I. on May 16th. Redwing recoveries show that the species tends to be nomadic so far as its winter quarters are concerned; birds ringed one winter in this country are often

recovered on similar dates in following years in other countries. An outstanding example of this was a bird ringed at Kempton Park, Middx., on Jan. 19th 1980 and shot or killed in Georgia, USSR on Dec. 15th, 3387km to the south-east. Another, probably on passage, was ringed at Dartford, Kent on Oct. 10th 1981 and shot at San Peoro De Sa, Ninho, Portugal on Dec. 26th, 1256km south-west.

The only foreign recovery of a Sedge Warbler reported is well worth mentioning. Ringed as an adult at Maple Cross S.F., on July 26th 1981, it was controlled at Lac Aougoundou, Mali on Mar. 31st and again on Apr. 12th, 3988km south. It was unusual not to hear of any foreign recoveries of Reed Warbler, but several longevity birds were reported, including one ringed at Sewardstone, Essex on Aug. 3rd 1975 which was controlled at Windsor, Berks., on June 5th. An extract from a paper being prepared on *Acrocephalus* species breeding at West Thurrock over the last five years shows that in 1982 there was a relatively high return of adult birds ringed in 1981 — 18% against a comparatively low figure for juveniles of 4%.

After the autumn migration recoveries of Lesser Whitethroats in Egypt in 1980 and Switzerland in 1981, this year brought the fourth recovery of a British-ringed Lesser Whitethroat in Israel, when one ringed at Bedfont Quarry on Aug. 22nd 1981 was controlled at Eilat, Israel on Mar. 15th, 3568km to the south-east. The number of wintering Blackcaps ringed within the Society's boundary appears to increase yearly, similar to sight records which are mainly of birds feeding in gardens. Locations given on ringing returns give the impression that most of the birds ringed are caught at regular ringing sites. A non-wintering first-year female, ringed at the Queen Mary Res., on Oct. 10th 1981, was 'caught' at Quezzane, Morrocco on Jan. 1st, 1910km south-west. Chiffchaffs also seemed to have wintered in good numbers especially at the end of the year; the Rye Meads R.G., ringed five in December. It is interesting to note that no reports were received of any wintering birds other than *P.c. collybita*. Retrap data on Willow Warblers showed that a fairly substantial number of birds ringed in previous years

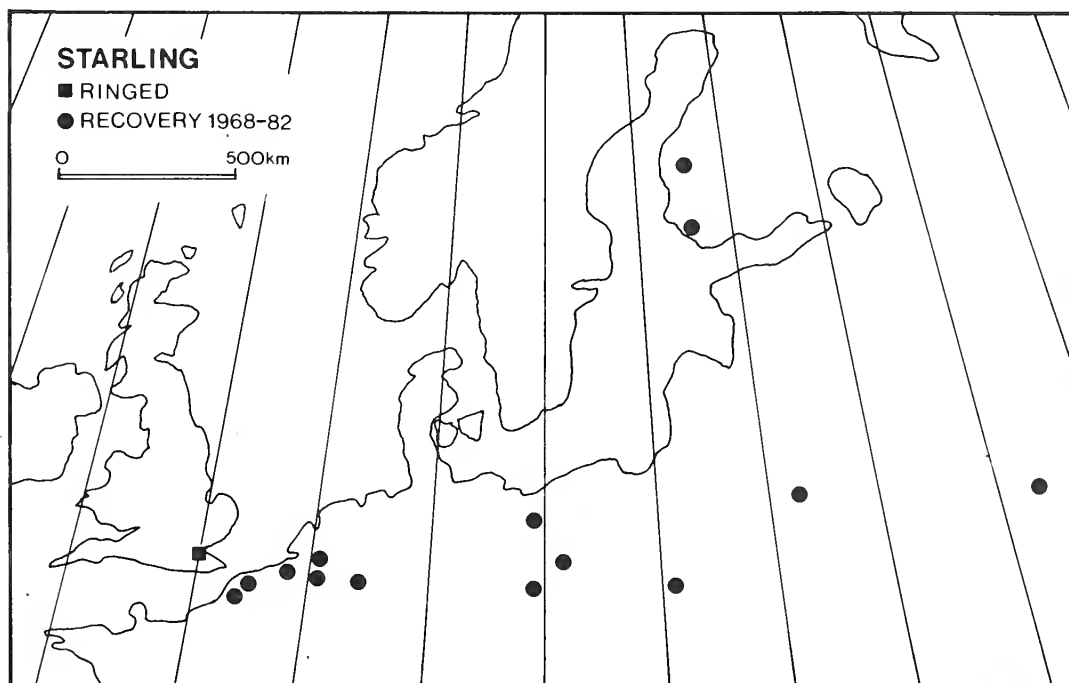


Fig. 1. Continental recoveries between 1968 and 1982 of Starlings ringed by the Dartford Ringing Group.

returned to their breeding territories, including one ringed at Joyden's Wood, Kent in June 1977.

No outstanding recoveries of any member of the tit family were received. Details of retraps submitted by the Hershams R.G. showed a Long-tailed Tit was retrapped 8 years and 24 days after it had been ringed, while another ringed at Maple Cross S.F., on Nov. 30th 1977 was retrapped in 1978, 1979, 1980 and again on Aug. 1st this year. A Goldcrest ringed at Kempton Park on Oct. 17th 1981 and killed by a cat at Canterbury, Kent on Apr. 15th was the only recovery of this species.

The farthest Starling recovery was a bird ringed at Beddington S.F., on Feb. 7th and controlled at Reeuwick, Zuid Holland, Netherlands on May

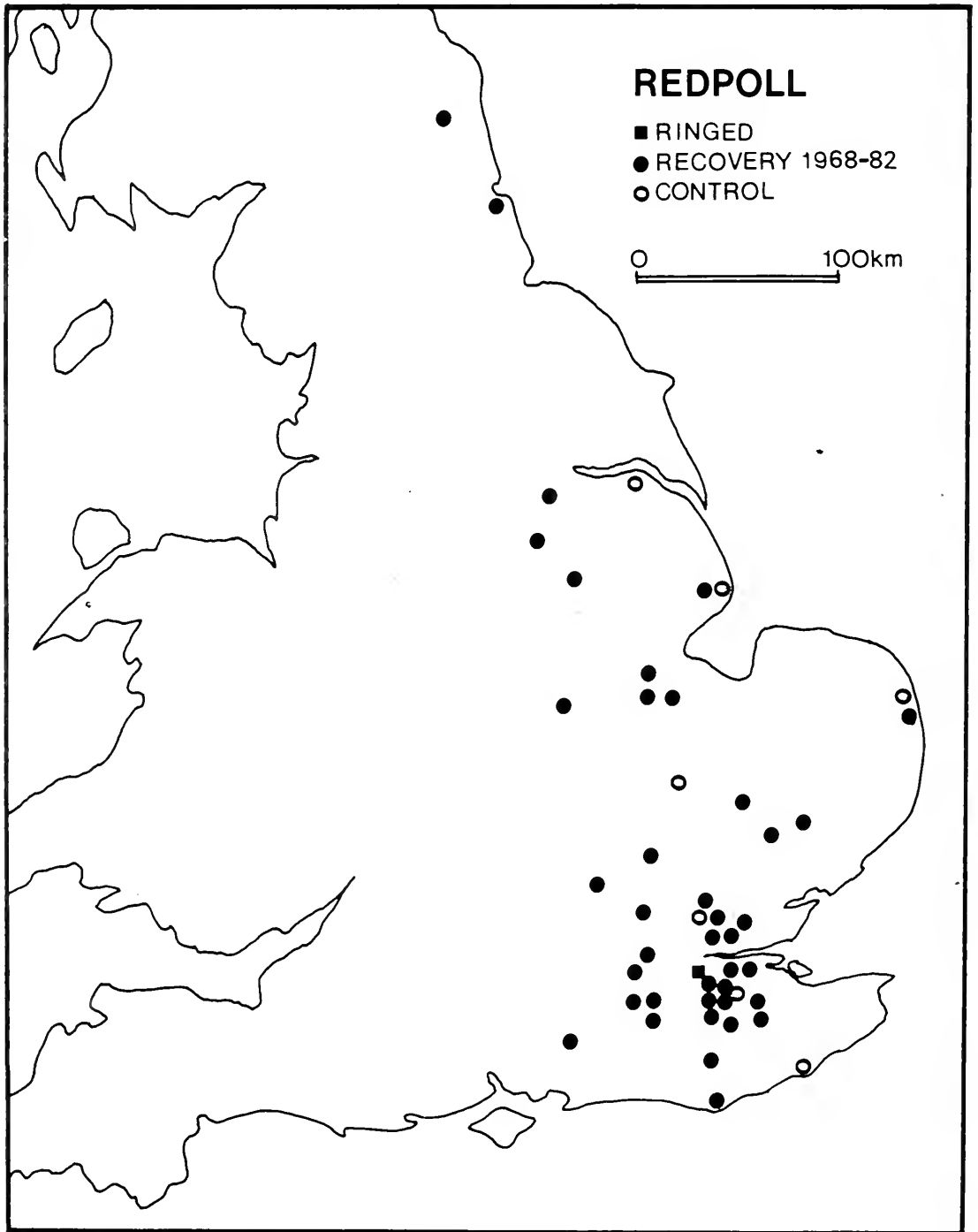


Fig. 2. English recoveries between 1968 and 1982 of Redpolls ringed by the Dartford Ringing Group at Joyden's Wood, Kent.

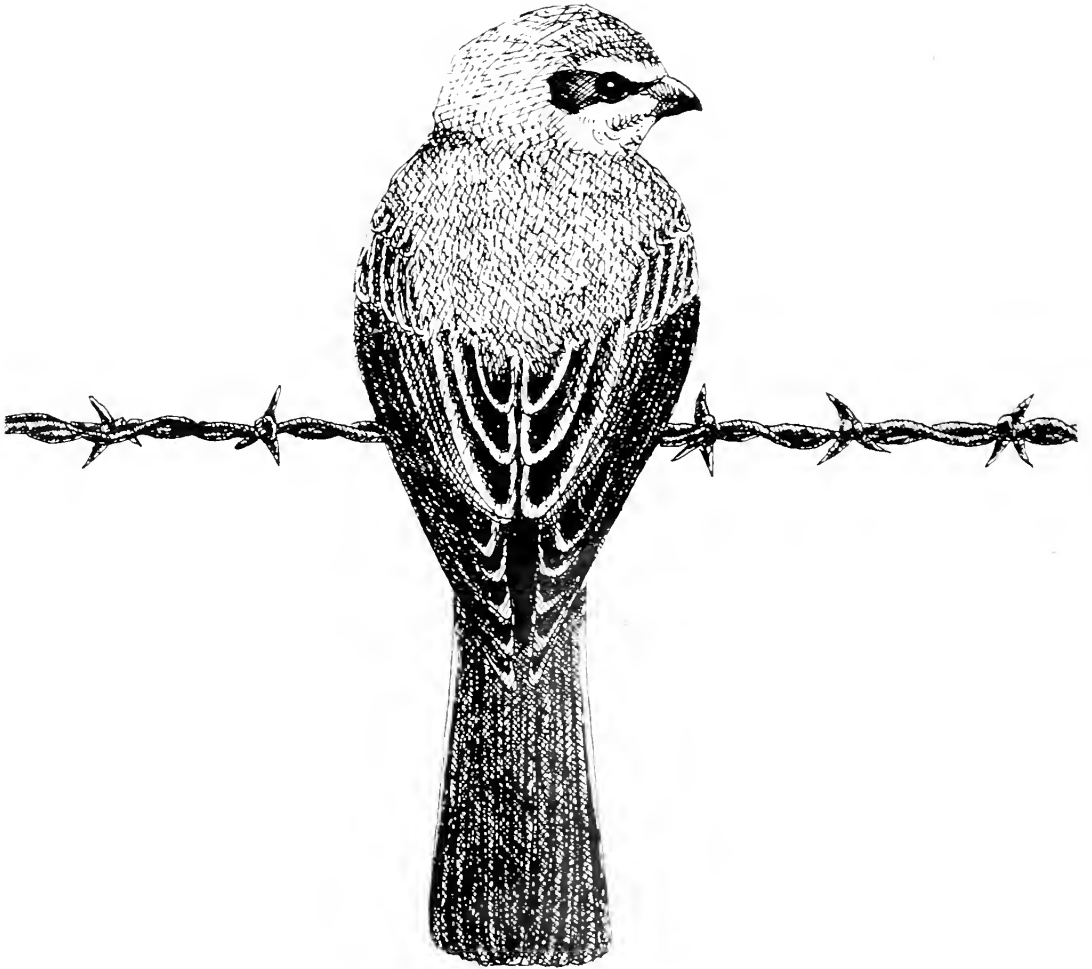
26th, 345km east. A map (Fig. 1) depicting the Dartford Ringing Group's Continental recoveries of this species 1968-82 shows a remarkably straight migration-line eastwards with the exception of two recoveries in Finland.

Although there were no foreign recoveries of any member of the finch family, a Norwegian-ringed Chaffinch was controlled at Rye Meads on Jan. 16th having been ringed at Avne, Rindal, More og Ronsday, Norway on Sept. 9th 1981, a movement of 1362km south-west. Peak movements of Greenfinch through the Area again occurred during March and April and, as in previous years, there were several controls of birds ringed in the West Country during winter months; one ringed at Potters Bar, Herts., on Mar. 7th 1981 was controlled at Le Foulon, Guernsey, C.I. on Mar. 14th. The only Goldfinch recovered over 20km was ringed at Rye Meads on Aug. 28th and controlled at East Grinstead, Sussex on Nov. 20th. Siskin numbers were high during February and March; one ringer reported 184 in his garden during this period. Details submitted reflecting the decline in the number of Redpolls ringed at Joyden's Wood during the last eight years showed a ringing total of 657 in 1975, decreasing yearly to a total of only 25 in 1982. A map (Fig. 2), plotting the English recoveries and controls of Redpoll caught at this site since 1968, reveals that all movements were confined to the eastern half of the country.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

The compiler gratefully acknowledges the valuable information received from the following contributors: D. Bailey (Hersham R.G.), P. Delaloye (Maple Cross R.G.), G. Geen (Hersham R.G.), K. J. Herber (Runnymede R.G.), P. Meridith (Dartford R.G.), M. Netherwood, K. Parsley, R. F. Sanderson, T. S. Spall (Rye Meads R.G.), B. Taggart, R. Taylor (Dartford R. G.), J. P. Widgery. The artwork for the figures was drawn by Ken Osborne.

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G.M. HAIG.

Note for Contributors

The Editor welcomes papers, short notes and photographs relating to the ornithology of the London Area, and will be pleased to advise authors on the acceptability of material at draft stage if desired.

Manuscripts All texts must be typewritten, double-spaced on A4 paper, using one side of the sheet only. A wide left-hand margin is essential. Lines should be full-out, except for new paragraphs and turned lines in lists. Underlining should be restricted to works to be set in italics. Tables and captions must be typed on separate sheets.

Style English names of birds and animals require initial capitals except after a hyphen, but group names and flowers do not. Scientific names should be underlined for italics, but only the first (generic) name needs an initial capital. Their use in the text is optional if listed in *The 'British Birds' List of Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Dates should take the form Apr. 28th, 1976; numbers under eleven should be spelt out in text; fractions should be decimalized; and, whenever possible, metric equivalents should be given in brackets after English measurements. Optional spellings should adopt the forms recommended by Fowler and/or the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Abbreviations should be standard. Full points should be omitted from well-known initials, such as BTO, LNHS and RSPB, but retained in 'e.g.', 'i.e.' and 'et al'. Quotation marks, if used, should be single not double. Publications should not be in quotes, but underlined for italics. Parenthesis within brackets should be avoided. References need to adopt the following style:

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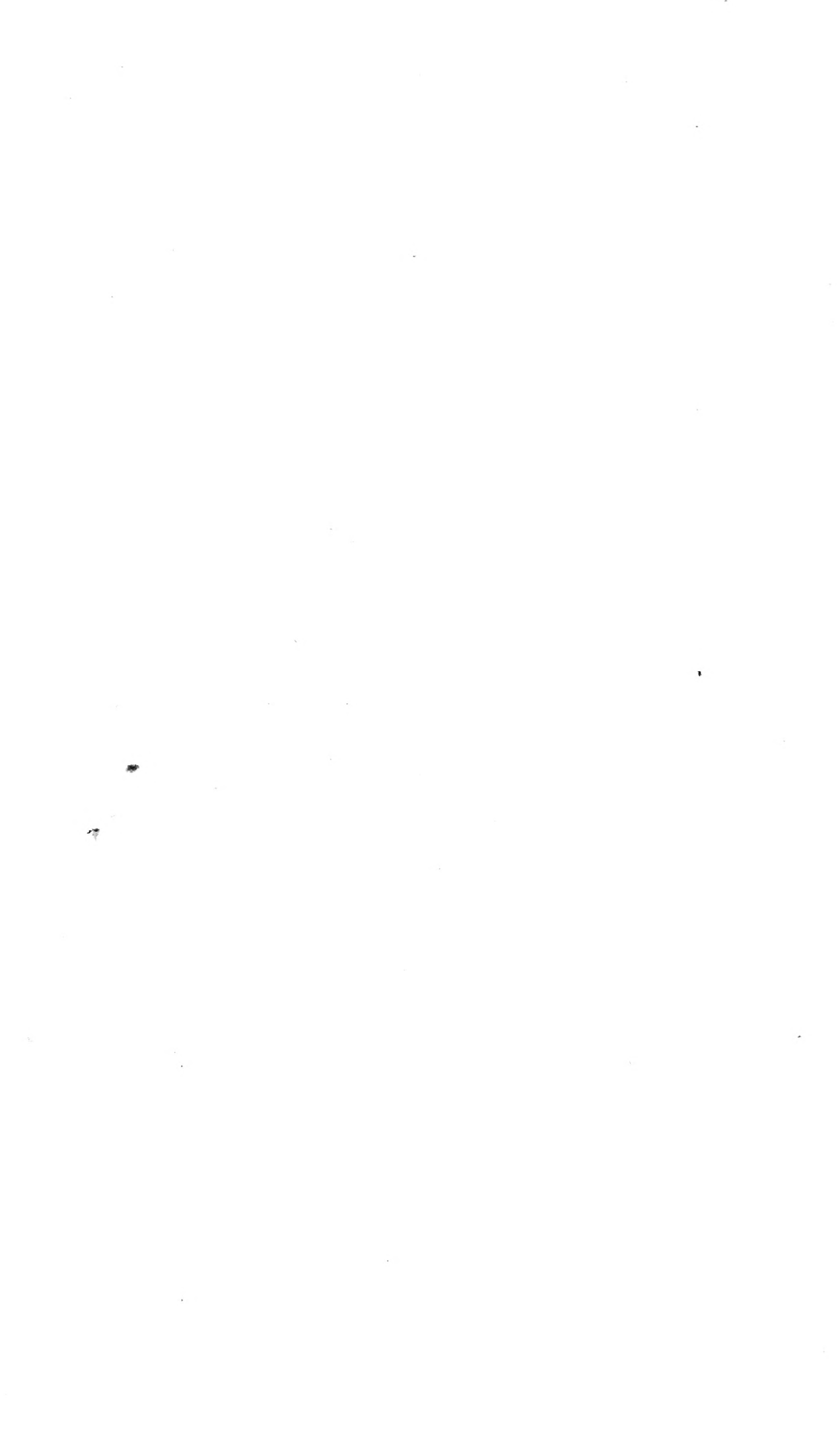
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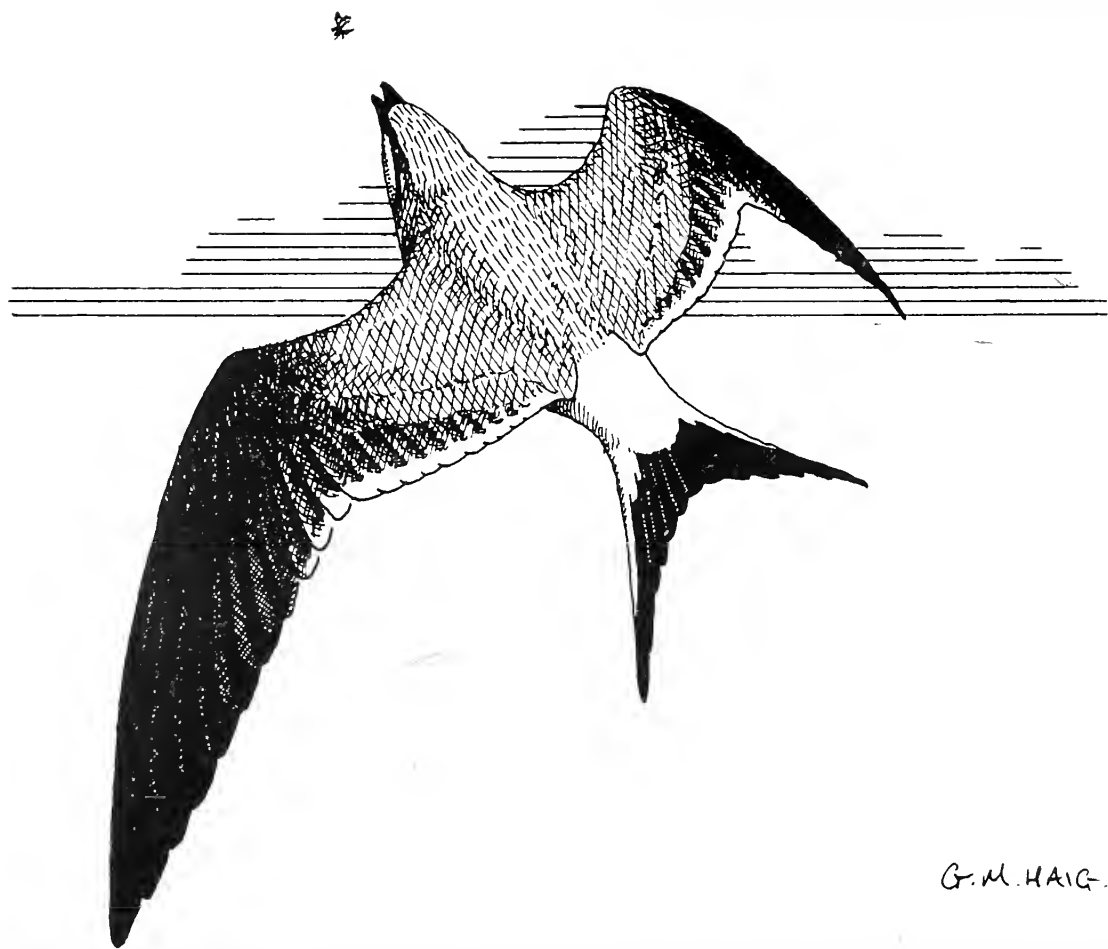
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LONDON BIRD REPORT



G.M. HAIG.

London Natural History Society

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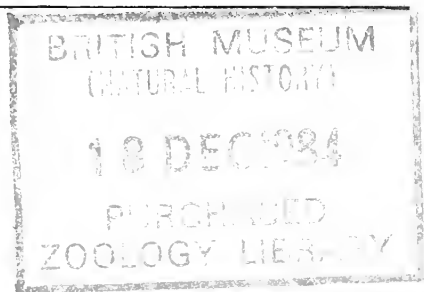
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London Bird Report 1983

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Cover:

Collared Pratincole by *G. M. Haig*

Photographs

Page 62 Black-throated Diver, Holmethorpe S.P., January 1983 (*R. B. Hastings*); Alpine Swift, Barn Elms Reservoir, April 1983 (*R. B. Hastings*); Guillemot, River Thames at Barnes Bridge, March 1983 (*R. B. Hastings*).

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London Bird Report 1983

Editor: A. V. MOON, Chalk Dell House, London Road, Rickmansworth, Herts.

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Introduction

For the fourth year in a row the recorders remain unchanged, although readers are asked to note the change of address of the Inner London recorder, Doug Boyd, who has moved out to Bookham.

However the two most senior officers involved in the production of the *London Bird Report* step down this year. Peter Clement relinquishes the Editorship after four inspired years during which time he has brought about many improvements to the layout and presentation of the report. Peter follows the Nature Conservancy Council in their relocation to Peterborough, we wish him well and thank him for a job well done. Peter Oliver has decided to hand over the reins as Chairman of the Records Committee, a position he has held since 1972. We thank him for his excellent Chairmanship and hope that he remains as prolific a writer on birds in the London Area as he has proved to be over the last 11 years. Ken Osborne has kindly agreed to take over as his successor.

It was with great sadness that we noted the recent death of Leslie Baker; a past Vice-President of the Society who had been closely involved with the LNHS since 1948. Subsequently he held many roles involved in the production of the *London Bird Report*, and variously served as a member of the Records Committee, as Editor (1961-62) and as Business Manager (1969-73). In addition his delightful vignettes featured on the front covers of the 1950 and 1969 bird reports as well as accompanying many species' accounts in the *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the London Area*. He was also responsible for redesigning the front cover in 1948 and again in 1970 as well as appearing as a contributor in almost every year since 1948; it is particularly appropriate that he featured in the systematic list in his final year.

It is a pleasure to note yet another increase in the number of contributors to the systematic list. The more people who submit their records to the relevant recorder, the more comprehensive and interesting a bird report we are able to produce.

Mute Swan and Canada Goose surveys were undertaken during 1983 as well as the gull roost census; Winter Atlas work continued at both ends of the year. Hopefully the results of these research projects will be discussed more fully in forthcoming issues.

Line drawings are again a feature in this year's report, and all artists who would like to have their work included are asked to forward their drawings to the Editor.

It has been Editorial policy up until now to refer to totals of the rare or unusual species provided in the systematic list as referring to the present century. This dates back to the publication of *The Birds of the London Area* which only dealt with records from 1900 onwards. In future running totals which are included for the relevant species can be assumed to refer only to the present century.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editor gratefully acknowledges the enthusiastic support of all observers who contributed records to this edition of the *London Bird Report*. He especially thanks the recorders and the writers who helped to compile the systematic list, and Gavin Haig who contributed the drawing on the front cover of this issue as well as the illustrations inside. Also to Rupert Hastings for providing the photographs and to Ken Osborne who supplied the two maps in this edition, both of which are up to his usual high standard.

He also acknowledges the many courtesies extended to members by the Greater London Council, the Thames Water Authority and the Port of London Authority. Thanks are also due to the following organisations for their generous help in the exchange of records:

British Birds Rarities Committee
 Buckinghamshire Bird Club
 Essex Birdwatching and Preservation Society
 Hertfordshire Natural History Society
 Kent Ornithological Society
 Lea Valley Project Group
 Reading Ornithological Society
 Surrey Bird Club

Records Committee

K. C. OSBORNE, *Chairman*

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Surrey†	R. B. HASTINGS, 33 Bracken Gardens, Barnes, London S.W.13.

*including records on the Lower Thames from London Bridge to Tilbury

†including records on the River Thames from Staines to Wandsworth

Highlights of the Year

1983 was notable for the first occurrence of two species in the London Area. First was a **Bonaparte's Gull** in January, followed by a **Wilson's Phalarope** in September. These two Nearctic birds took the total for the London Area to 312*, taking into account the recent acceptance of a third new species for London, **Ring-billed Gull**, which was identified in 1979 and again in 1982. Also of note in 1983 was the first record of a definite **Collared Pratincole**, following two records of pratincoles not specifically identified.

In addition to the **Bonaparte's Gull**, January produced the 12th record of **Red Kite**, only the second winter record. A **Whinchat** on Jan. 9th was remarkable for the time of year. February will always be remembered for the invasion of auks. The first was noted on Feb. 6th and the final tally ran to seven **Guillemots**, three **Razorbills**, two **Little Auks** and three **Puffins**.

In March a **Willow Warbler** was last seen which had been present since the previous December, constituting the first long stay by this species in winter. A **Raven** was the 12th ever but must attract doubts about its origin. April produced the 12th ever **Bluethroat**, more notable for being one of the white-spotted race which had not been identified in London before. A strong passage of **Pied Flycatchers** created a stir and a presumably northbound **Iceland Gull** was only the second seen since 1968. Rarities included London's ninth **White Stork** and tenth **Alpine Swift**. Between April and June five **Kentish Plovers** were seen (four at Staines Res.) in a remarkable passage considering there were only 16 previous records. **Avocets** also appeared in good numbers and the **Baird's Sandpiper** was last seen on Apr. 24th.

May produced two well-watched vagrants, the fifth **Night Heron** for London, and the second **Alpine Swift** of the spring which surprised everyone by staying for at least 17 days. There seem to be no other significant records for that month but events took a turn in early June with the appearance of London's ninth **Red-necked Phalarope** and a **Manx Shearwater** at a unique time of year. Remarkable also were the occurrences of the second-ever **Icterine Warbler** and the fifth **Melodious Warbler** on consecutive dates, both birds being found in song. The **Collared Pratincole** was found on the 19th and only stayed three hours but immediate phone calls drew a good audience.

In the breeding season a number of species continued their increases or declines from previous years. The **Canada Goose** survey revealed monstrous numbers of adults and young, and the **Greylag Goose** population had grown to about 840 birds by the autumn. **Mandarin** and **Ruddy Duck** showed some signs of spread and **Hobby** bred after a gap of five years. **Nightingale** and **Wood Warbler** underwent welcome increases, as did **Tree Pipit**, **Stonechat**, **Garden Warbler** and **Wren**. **Magpie** numbers continued to rise, no doubt to the detriment of many smaller passerines. **Black Redstarts** are probably maintaining their quite strong breeding presence. Species very low on the downward slope sadly included **Barn Owl** and **Nightjar** whose national populations are well known to be dropping, with no clear reasons presently known for the former. Others with fallen breeding numbers were **Redstart**, **Grasshopper Warbler** and **Tree Sparrow**. Having bred in 1980 and 1981, **Cetti's Warbler** failed to do so for the second year in a row, so looked well short of establishing itself in the London Area.

Returning to non-breeding birds, a **Red-necked Grebe** summered at William Girling Res., just as one had done the previous year. In July, the first **Fulmar** ever seen in that month was the 13th for London, and a group of 25 **Common Scoter** was the second largest flock ever recorded in the Area. The **Black-necked Grebe** flock at Staines in August reached a high of 20, well under the 33 of 1982 presumably because of the drained north basin.

September produced a fine variety of unusual visitors, led by the **Wilson's Phalarope** which was seen by numerous people at Staines Res. during its 13 day stay. Prominent early in the month, largely on the 3rd, was an exceptional influx of seabirds during strong westerly winds. This included the unprecedented total of 12 **Leach's Petrels**, as well as two **Storm Petrels**, a species last recorded way back in 1966. A **Manx Shearwater** and three **Gannets** also made it into the Area. For the fifth year in succession a **Spotted Crake** was found, and the fifth **Marsh Harrier** of the year made it the second best year ever for that raptor. From late September, a small influx of **Jays** did not match numbers in coastal regions but there was a marked arrival of **Goldcrests**. In October the only **Pectoral Sandpiper** of the year appeared at Rainham Marsh where there was also London's 12th ever **Spoonbill**. Near the end of the month a second but much smaller seabird arrival involved yet another **Storm Petrel**, a **Guillemot** and a **Little Auk**. The 12th **Lapland Bunting** for London was also found at this time.

The second **Fulmar** of the year was a surprise in November, and this month produced six of the year's ten records of **Brent Goose**. London's ninth **Shore Lark** passed through at the same time as some of the Brents. The second **Iceland Gull** of the year was found in December. Lastly 1983 proved to be the best year ever for **Firecrests**, with records from 19 localities.

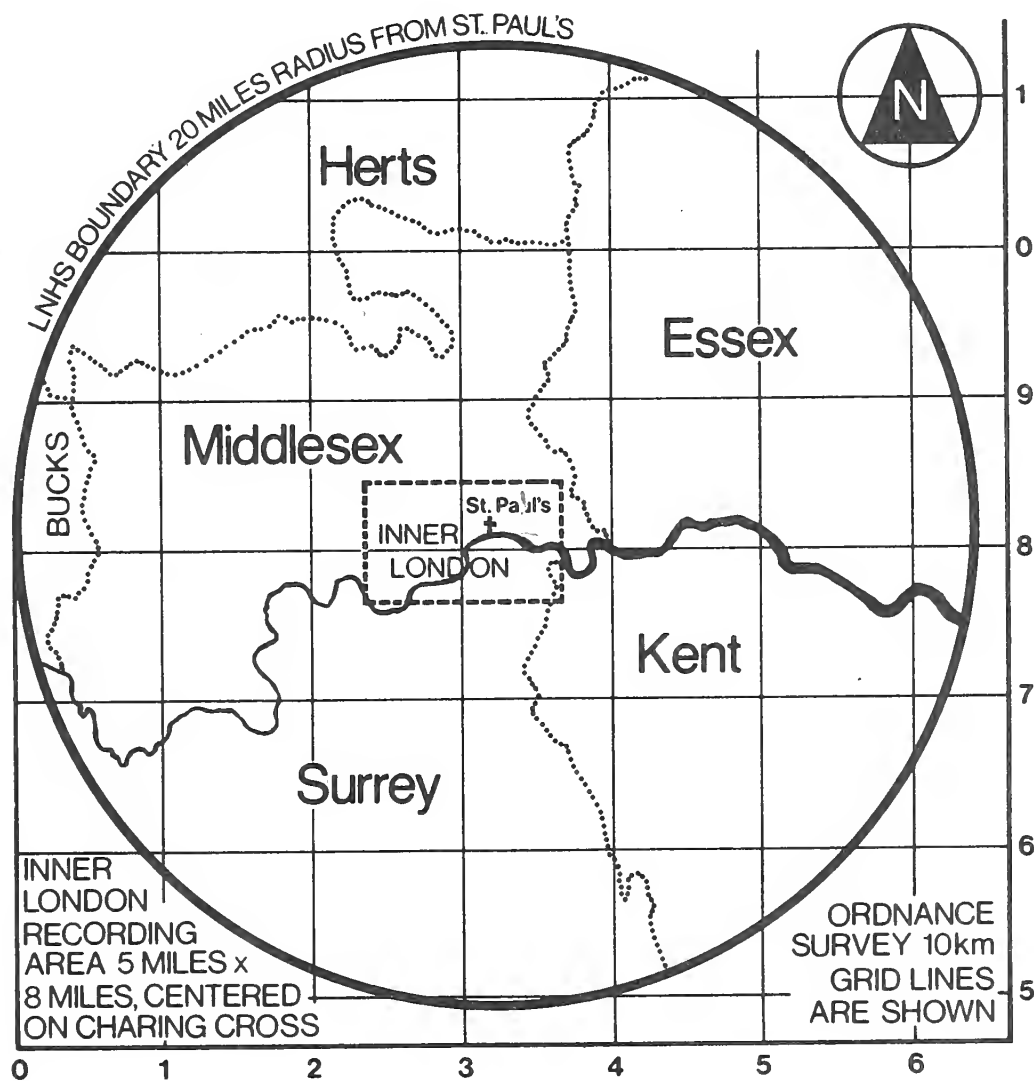
*This total does not include Lady Amherst's Pheasant which was included in error in the Checklist of the Birds of the London Area, (LBR 43: 78-84), but does include Snowy Owl which was omitted from this list in error. This apart the Checklist remains unchanged.

First and Last Dates of Migrants

<i>Summer Migrants</i>	<i>Arrival</i>		<i>Departure</i>			
Hobby	Apr. 20	Staines Res.	GMH, AVM	Sept. 26	Staines Res.	AVM
Little Ringed Plover	Mar. 12	Rye Meads S.F.	BT	Oct. 14	Staines Res.	BAR
Common Tern	Apr. 9	Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG	Oct. 22	Fishers Green G.P.	GJW
					Nazeing G.P.	IK
Black Tern	Apr. 16	Hilfield Park Res.	CIB	Oct. 20	Hilfield Park Res.	SHM
Turtle Dove	Apr. 21	Stanstead Abbots G.P.	GJW	Oct. 8	Staines Res.	RJF
Cuckoo	Mar. 27	Beddington S.F.	GDJM	Sept. 25	Tytenhanger	PDW
Nightjar	May 18	Broxbourne Woods	mo	—	—	—
Swift	Apr. 19	three localities		Sept. 27	Nazeing G.P.	BC
Sand Martin	Mar. 12	Staines Res.	GMH	Oct. 15	Rainham Marsh	MKD
Swallow	Apr. 9	Stone Marsh	DRG	Nov. 6	Barn Elms Res.	LSF
House Martin	Apr. 1	Surbiton	SDBWS	Nov. 10	Regent's Park	TRD
Tree Pipit	Apr. 9	Hainault Forest	MKD	Oct. 15	Rainham Marsh	MKD
Yellow Wagtail	Apr. 7	Bromley Common	GDn	Oct. 17	Wm. Girling Res.	PJV
Nightingale	Apr. 15	Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG	—	—	—
Redstart	Mar. 29	Hither Green	DD	Nov. 7	West Thurrock	RJM
Whinchat	Apr. 16	Park Street	JHT	Nov. 4	Walthamstow Res.	REH
		Sewardstone	JF			
Wheatear	Mar. 9	Rainham Marsh	NI	Nov. 17	Walthamstow Res.	JT
Grasshopper Warbler	Apr. 9	Crayford Ness	KHn	Sept. 3	Epsom Common	LMW
Sedge Warbler	Apr. 5	Brent Res.	LB, RW	Oct. 30	Queen Mary Res.	PCr
		Regent's Park	TRD			
Reed Warbler	Apr. 16	Park Street	JHT	Oct. 29	Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr. 22	Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG	Nov. 19	Queen Mary G.P.	HRG
Whitethroat	Apr. 9	Stone Wood (K)	DRG	Oct. 8	Walthamstow Marsh	TG
Garden Warbler	Apr. 16	Kempton Park	MJW	Sept. 24	Queen Mary G.P.	HRG
		Park Down	LR		Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG
Wood Warbler	Apr. 17	Sevenoaks G.P.	AHH	Aug. 12	Hampstead Heath	MN
Willow Warbler	Mar. 26	Sevenoaks G.P.	AHH	Oct. 7	Holmethorpe S.P.	mo
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr. 21	Aldenham Res.	MG	Oct. 2	Ruxley G.P.	WTGB
Pied Flycatcher	Apr. 15	St. Paul's Cray	KHP	Sept. 9	Headley Heath	mo
<i>Winter Migrants</i>	<i>Departure</i>			<i>Arrival</i>		
Fieldfare	Apr. 23	Symondshyde	PMD, MAH	Sept. 13	Staines Res.	MJW
Redwing	Apr. 24	Mitcham Common	MJN	Oct. 3	Park Street	JHT
					Tadworth	CKD, POD
Brambling	Apr. 24	Petts Wood	KHP	Oct. 6	Regent's Park	JPW
Siskin	Apr. 24	Lower Kingswood	IDd, JW	Oct. 5	Alexandra Park	NB

Recording Arrangements

The Society's recording area, which in this report is called the 'London Area', is bounded by a circle of 20 miles radius centred on St. Paul's Cathedral. Within the area, the original county boundaries are used for recording purposes, rather than the new administrative counties. In addition, there is a special recording zone for Inner London (a rectangle 5 miles \times 8 miles, centred on Charing Cross). All records of interest are welcome from members and non-members, and these should be sent to the appropriate Recorder (see list on page 4).



It will assist the speedy entering of records if the Society's recording sheets are used (available from Recorders on request), and if species are listed in the order followed in the *London Bird Report*. Separate sheets should be used for each recording area. Completed recording sheets should be submitted in August for the period January to July, and in early January for August to December.

Records of rare and unusual species in the London Area are examined by the Records Committee before inclusion in the *London Bird Report*. Published records need to stand the scrutiny of not only today's readers but

also anyone who in future years may refer to the systematic list. Brief field-notes are therefore required to provide supporting evidence of correct identification and authenticity for the following species:

All rare species

All out of season migrants

All divers	Little Gull away from regular haunts
Slavonian Grebe	All terns except Common and Black
Red-necked and Black-necked Grebes except at regular haunts	All auks
Petrels and shearwaters	Long-eared and Short-eared Owls
Gannet and Shag	Wryneck
All bitterns	Woodlark
Hérons other than Grey	Races of <i>Anthus spinoletta</i> other than Rock Pipit and Water Pipit at regular localities
Bewick's and Whooper Swans	White Wagtail in autumn
All geese except Canada	Races of hybrids of <i>Motacilla flava</i> other than Yellow Wagtail
Ferruginous Duck, Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Velvet Scoter and female Red-breasted Merganser	<i>M.f. flavissima</i>
All birds-of-prey excluding Kestrel and Sparrowhawk (except Inner London)	Waxwing
Quail	Ring Ouzel
Rails and crakes, except Water Rail, Moorhen and Coot	Unusual warblers
All waders of irregular occurrence	Firecrest
All skuas	Willow Tit away from regular haunts
All gulls of irregular occurrence including Iceland, Glaucous and Kittiwake	All shrikes
	Twite, Crossbill; Lapland, Snow and Cirl Buntings

Field-notes for each observation should be submitted to the recorder immediately following the observation, rather than waiting until the end of the year. Evidence needs to be brief but relevant, and should include a description of the essential features upon which identification was based, relative size, flight, calls, duration and distance of observation, and the observer's previous experience of this and similar species.

NATIONAL RARITIES

Records of national rarities (see list in *British Birds* 67 : 347-8) should be submitted preferably via the local recorder for forwarding to the national committee. If sent direct, a copy of the submission should be sent to the recorder. Observers are asked to submit records promptly to ensure acceptance and publication in the same year.

RARE BREEDING BIRDS

Breeding records of rare species (see list in *British Birds* 67 : 174) should be submitted preferably via the local recorder (stating degree of confidentiality required) for forwarding to the national Rare Breeding Birds Panel. All reports of these species (and others, less rare) are treated in complete confidence at county level. Names of localities are never published and only the name of the county is given in the *London Bird Report*.

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Birds of the London Area, 1983

with Additions and Corrections for previous years

A REPORT OF THE BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

The classification of species in this report is that adopted by K. H. Voous in his *List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species* (reprinted 1977 from *Ibis* 115: 612-38 and *Ibis* 119: 223-50, 376-406). Sequence and nomenclature follow the 'British Birds' *List of Birds of the Western Palearctic* (1978).

For recording purposes all species have been given numbers, with suffix letters for subspecies, but it should be noted that this numbering has no significance outside the London Area.

Observers' initials in the report are shown against principal records. A full list of observers appears on pages 11 and 12. The abbreviation 'mo' used for long-stay records indicates 'many observers'.

The six counties within the London Area are signified by initials in the report: E = Essex, H = Hertfordshire, M = Middlesex, B = Buckinghamshire, K = Kent and S = Surrey. Inner London records are normally under the respective counties (Middlesex and Surrey), but abbreviated as 'IL' in tables. For direction of flight, cardinal points are shortened to N, NE, NNE, etc. Other abbreviations are: Res. = reservoir, G. P. = gravel pit, N.R. = nature reserve, S. P. = sand pit, S.F. = sewage farm or works, and *Lond. Bird Rep.* or *LBR* = *London Bird Report*.

For a full appreciation of many of the records in this report, a detailed map of the London Area will be found useful. Reference should also be made to the Society's books *Birds of the London Area* (1957 and 1964) and *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the London Area* (1977), which gave the continuous history of species from 1900. A complete London Area Checklist (1901-77) appears in *London Bird Report* 43 : 71-84.

All running totals of rare or unusual birds that are provided in the systematic list can be assumed to refer only to the present century, unless stated otherwise.

1 Red-throated Diver

- E Epping, one found oiled on Feb. 22nd was handed to the RSPCA for treatment (NB). King George V Res., one found dead on Feb. 26th (PJV). Walthamstow Res., one present from Feb. 28th to Mar. 5th (JF, PF).

13 of the 38 records since 1970 involved birds that were either oiled or found dead, which stands as a reminder as to how prone this species is to oil pollution. All three records coincided with the cold weather in February.

2 Black-throated Diver

- E An immature bird first observed at Walthamstow Res., on Feb. 6th (MD) moved to Nazeing G.P. on Feb. 11th (MC *et al.*). The same bird reappeared at Fishers Green, where it stayed from May 2nd to July 2nd (JF, GJW), and it was last seen at Waltham Abbey on July 5th (DDe).
- S Holmethorpe S.P., a first-winter bird from Jan. 9th to Feb. 3rd (RWHS *et al.*).

There have now been 34 records since 1970, which is slightly less than the previous species; they do seem to have a better survival rate though. (See photograph on p. 62).

3 Great Northern Diver

- M Staines Res., one present from Feb. 20th to Mar. 17th (JAH, CJH, PN *et al.*). Wraybury Res., one in winter plumage on May 2nd (AVM, PN *et al.*).
S Barn Elms Res., a first-year bird from Dec. 21st until January 1984. (JPPW *et al.*).

These three records take the total number since 1970 to 17; this is the highest number in any year since four individuals were seen in 1974.

6 Little Grebe

In most areas the numbers of pairs breeding were similar to those in 1982. Breeding records, large counts and Inner London records are given. Numbers in brackets indicate the number of broods or breeding pairs.

- E Bred at Berwick Ponds (2-3), Fishers Green (1), Hornchurch (1), Netherhall G.P. (5), Ockenden G.P. (3), Roding (1), Thorndon Park (1), Upminster (1), Wanstead Park (1) and West Thurrock (2). West Thurrock, 24 on Nov. 20th.
H Bred at Amwell G.P. (5), Cheshunt G.P. (2), Hilfield Park Res. (5), Park Street G.P. (4), Rye Meads S.F. (5), Stanstead Abbots G.P. (1), and Stocker's Lake (2). Hilfield Park Res., 24 on Sept. 16th.
M Bred at Brent Res. (2), Denham (1), Perry Oaks S.F. (2), and Queen Mary G.P. (1). Brent Res., 30+ on Sept. 27th (LAB). Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on Feb. 4th and two from Dec. 17th until 22nd (DAB, EW). Regent's Park, one present at the end of April (TRDt). St. James's Park, a pair which abandoned their first nest subsequently re-nested and successfully reared two young (APGg), and several remained until the year's end (PJO). This is the first proved breeding in any of the Royal Parks since 1945. Breeding was recorded as long ago as 1885 in St. James's Park, although it bred as recently as 1977 in Inner London.
B Wraybury G.P., 25 on Mar. 13th.
K Bred at Beckenham (1), Erith Marsh (1), Ruxley G.P. (1) and Thamesmead (1). Littlebrook G.P., 32 on Nov. 6th.
S Bred at Epsom Great Pond (1), Esher Black Pond (1), Godstone S.P. (2), Holmethorpe S.P. (1) and Waddon Ponds (1).

7 Great Crested Grebe

Winter numbers were well up on the previous season, the September count increasing for the second successive year to 858 (from 605 in 1982) and remaining in excess of 500 until the turn of the year. Breeding pairs were reported as follows:

	Essex	Herts	Middx.	Inner London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	Total
1982	52	55	43	13	3	7	20	193
1983	46	58	48	14	—	5	19	190

Bucks and Kent appear to be under-recorded; Surrey data may be incomplete. Figures elsewhere suggest a general upward trend. The total for Inner London is the highest ever.

In the summary below, concentrations of ten or more breeding pairs, Inner London breeding records as well as autumn and winter counts in excess of 100 birds are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., ten broods. King George V Res., max. 120 on Aug. 14th.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 15 broods. Hilfield Park Res., 118 on Sept. 29th, 150 on Oct. 31st, 147 on Nov. 11th and 186 on Nov. 19th.
- M Brent Res., 21 pairs bred. Queen Mary Res., monthly maxima of over 100: 158 on Feb. 20th, 106 on Mar. 13th, 165 on July 23rd, 359 on Aug. 20th, 353 on Sept. 27th, 343 on Oct. 2nd, 143 on Nov. 6th, and 107 on Dec. 11th. Staines Res., 100 on Jan. 2nd, 111 on Dec. 4th and 192 on Dec. 11th. Inner London: Hyde Park, two pairs bred on the Serpentine. Kensington Gardens, four pairs bred on Long Water. Regent's Park, six pairs bred, rearing 18 young. Victoria Park, a pair and three young on June 21st.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 124 on Sept. 18th.
- S Inner London: Battersea Park, one pair bred. Surrey Docks, a pair on June 2nd but there was no evidence of nesting.

8 Red-necked Grebe

- E Wm. Girling Res., one from Feb. 20th to Nov. 12th (JF) and presumably the same bird at King George V Res., on Nov. 20th (PJV).
- M Brent Res., one in full summer plumage on May 23rd (DAW). Wraysbury Res., one on Jan. 16th (AVM, PN *et al.*) was later seen at Queen Mother Res.
- B Queen Mother Res., one on Jan. 23rd (AVM, PN).
- S Barn Elms Res., one first observed on Nov. 29th was still present in March 1984 (JBT, RBH). River Thames at Kew Bridge, one on Feb. 22nd (RBH).

Only five records compared with 18 in 1982. For the second consecutive year one was present throughout the summer at Wm. Girling Res., this was the sixth summering record for the London Area this century.

9 Slavonian Grebe

- E King George V Res., one on Mar. 13th and one on several dates between Sept. 27th and Oct. 15th (RL, PJV). Nazeing G.P., one from Feb. 19th to the 27th (GJW *et al.*). Wm. Girling Res., one on Feb. 19th and 20th (JF).
- M Queen Mary Res., one on Nov. 8th and 17th (GAR). Staines Res., one in full summer plumage on Apr. 9th (GMH, BAR *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., one present in December 1982 remained until Jan. 9th (mo).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Nov. 20th (JTr).
- S Barn Elms Res., singles on Apr. 14th and Dec. 7th (NPS, RBH).

Following the above-average numbers recorded in 1982 this represents a return to more normal totals; all records were of single birds.

10 Black-necked Grebe

- E King George V Res., one on Feb. 27th and one from Aug. 31st to Sept. 5th (PJV). Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 12th and 13th and one from Oct. 25th to Nov. 27th (JF, PF, JT). Wm. Girling Res., up to four on various dates from Jan. 2nd to Apr. 4th with a maximum of five on Mar. 19th, two on several dates from Sept. 18th to Nov. 26th,

- four on Dec. 12th and five from Dec. 18th to the 25th (PAB, JF, PJV).
 H Hilfield Park Res., one from Aug. 23rd to 25th and another on Sept. 25th (CIB, PAW). Troy Mill G.P., one on Sept. 24th (IGJ).
 M King George VI Res., five were present on Mar. 12th and 20th with a maximum of eight on the 26th, five on Apr. 4th and two on the 9th were the last observed on spring passage. There was only one autumn record of nine on Sept. 3rd (AVM, PN). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Sept. 12th, two on the 14th and one on the 25th (TJD, JAS). Queen Mary Res., one on Feb. 26th and one on Dec. 29th (HRG, APM). Shepperton G.P., three on Apr. 20th (HWE). Staines Res., a single bird on many dates from Feb. 21st until Mar. 10th when it was joined by two others, four on Mar. 13th and 15th then one on the 16th and 19th. Autumn passage began with one on July 2nd, numbers then increased to 11 by the end of the month. The autumn maximum of 20 on Aug. 17th, 29th and 30th was well below the maximum of 33 in 1982 (mo). Numbers declined during September and only one was present from Oct. 7th to Nov. 13th (PN *et al.*).
 S Barn Elms Res., one on Sept. 9th (RBH *et al.*). Island Barn Res., two on several dates from Jan. 16th to Feb. 13th, four on Sept. 18th, two on Oct. 16th and Nov. 13th, one on Dec. 11th and two from the 18th until the end of the year (PCT, RBH *et al.*). Walton Res., two on Sept. 11th and one on Nov. 12th (SDBWS).

Both spring and autumn passage numbers were similar to those of 1982 with the exception of Staines Res., where the species had to forsake its favourite section – the drained north basin – in favour of the much less-frequented south basin. Clearly numbers on the adjacent King George VI were boosted because of this.

12 Fulmar

- M Twickenham, an injured or sick bird was found in a garden on July 7th following a severe thunderstorm on July 6th (ALJB).
 S Woodmansterne, one flew WNW on Nov. 14th (PJS).

These two records, including the first in July, take the London total to 14.

18 Manx Shearwater

- H/B Tilehouse G.P. (North), one on June 7th (IGJ, KJ *et al.*).
 M Staines Res., one on Sept. 5th and 6th (GMH *et al.*).

The September record is typical, but the June bird (the first during this month in London) was probably disorientated by recent thunderstorms.

22 Storm Petrel

- E Wm. Girling Res., one on Sept. 3rd (JF, AJG, PJV *et al.*).
 K Crayford, a bird that 'fluttered down into the boot of a car' on Oct. 25th died a few hours later (GCN, JMS). Dartford Creek, one found exhausted on Sept. 7th died the following day (PC, JMS).

Linked with the Leach's Petrel 'wreck,' this species was affected, numerically, in far greater quantities along the coasts of southwest England, so it is perhaps surprising that only two records materialized in early September. No more than a single bird has been seen in London in any year prior to 1983; these three take the London total to 11.

23 Leach's Petrel

- E King George V Res., two on Sept. 3rd, one died later (GJW *et al.*). River Thames at Rainham, one on Sept. 5th (MKD). River Thames at Barking, one on Sept. 4th (MKD). Wm. Girling Res., two on Sept. 3rd (PJV *et al.*).
- H Hilfield Park Res., one on Sept. 3rd (CIB).
- M Queen Mary Res., an adult on Sept. 3rd (ML, BAR *et al.*). Inner London: Caledonia Street, N1, one picked up exhausted on Sept. 3rd died later (*per* NB).
- B Queen Mother Res., two adults on Sept. 3rd (AVM, PN *et al.*).
- K A bird handed into the Bird Hospital, Bexley on Sept. 21st, died the following day (JMS); it was probably found on Crayford Marsh.
- An intense Atlantic depression that swept across southern England on the night of Sept. 2nd was responsible for all but one of these records, and also dozens of other inland sightings in southern counties on Sept. 3rd. Nine records of 12 birds is certainly without precedent in London; all previous sightings have involved single birds. Only the seven records in 1952 approach this year's total.

25 Gannet

- E Walthamstow, two circled and then drifted E on Sept. 3rd (MJM).
- K Thamesmead, an adult flew W on Sept. 14th (PJS).
- The two birds on Sept. 3rd were clearly involved in the petrel 'wreck' and must have approached from the west. The London total stands at 41.

26 Cormorant

- E Walthamstow Res., the roost-dispersal operations carried out by the Thames Water Authority during March resulted in only 60 being present by the 22nd. Numbers built up again from September to a maximum of 112 on Nov. 7th, after further roost-disturbance numbers declined to around 60 at the end of the year (PAB, JF, RL). Beckton, 24 on Dec. 18th (KB). Fishers Green, present from January to May with a maximum of 142 on Mar. 19th after the Walthamstow roost had been dispersed. Present again from September to the end of the year with a maximum of 95 on Dec. 21st (JF, GJW). Wm. Girling Res., the Walthamstow Res. dispersal was probably responsible for a count of 110 on Nov. 6th (PJV).
- H Colne and Lea Valleys, parties up to 27 reported from several localities from January to March, numbers then declined. None were present from mid-May until early September after which numbers increased with a maximum of 50 at Broxbourne G.P. on Dec. 18th (mo).
- M Harefield Moor G.P., roost-counts frequently exceeded 100 during winter months with a maximum of 115 on Jan. 8th, otherwise present in small numbers in all months except the period from May to July (JE *et al.*). Staines Res., max. 34 on Nov. 13th (APG). Wraysbury Res., present in all months except August, with a maximum of 178 on Oct. 4th (TJD). Smaller numbers at several other reservoirs and localities in most months of the year. Inner London: Hyde Park, up to three on the Serpentine most days from February to March; one to four from October until the end of the year (DAB, EW).
- B Queen Mother Res., max. 42 on Feb. 12th (AVM). Also reported from several other localities in the Colne Valley.
- K River Thames, small numbers reported in all months except May and

June, max. 15 at Barking on Nov. 15th (PJS). Away from the river there were two July records: four at Sevenoaks G.P. on the 8th and four flying E over Orpington on the 13th (BB,JTR).

- S Reported in all months of the year except June and July. Reservoir and gravel pit maxima were: Barn Elms Res., 65 on Dec. 11th (NPS). Queen Elizabeth II Res., 119 on Mar. 13th (DGN,CO). Thorpe Water Park, 48 on Dec. 18th (DKJW). Walton Res., 110 on Mar. 20th (ML). Upper Thames: present most months on the river between Chiswick and Isleworth Ait, with a maximum of 20+ at Brentford on Dec. 4th (BCW). The highest number away from water was 13 flying NE over Epsom on Aug. 28th (JRBY). Inner London: Up to six flying along the River Thames on numerous dates from January until the end of March and from late September onwards. Since the closure of Battersea Power Station a small number of birds have been observed perching on cranes and posts on the raised platform in the river (PCT).

27 Shag

- E River Thames at Rainham, one on Dec. 4th and 19th (MKD).
 H Hampermill Lake, two adults from Jan. 22nd to Feb. 5th (MG). Rye Meads S.F., an immature on Oct. 28th and 29th (RMRG).
 M Harefield Place G.P., one on Mar. 13th (PN). Stoke Newington Res., one on Dec. 10th and 11th (TG).
 S River Thames at Hammersmith Bridge, an immature bird from Feb. 13th to Apr. 20th, was probably the bird that was present in December 1982 (RBH).

30 Bittern

- H Amwell G.P., one was 'rescued' in early January but died later (*per PJCR*). Cheshunt G.P., singles on Mar. 12th and 26th, and on Nov. 30th (MJHR, HM, EAW). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one from Dec. 23rd until the end of the year (RMRG). Stocker's Lake, one on Dec. 23rd (ART *et al.*), was still present in 1984. Turnford Marsh, one on Nov. 26th (GJW).

1981 Additional Record

- M Brent Res., one on Jan. 12th (ACW).

1982 Additional Record

- M Brent Res., one on Jan. 9th (DAW).

Recorded every year since 1966 as a winter visitor and fairly regularly at certain localities.

33 Night Heron



- B Wraysbury G.P., an adult in full breeding dress from May 4th to 8th (R. J. Johns *et al.*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the sixth London record. The chosen roosting site of this bird – an alder tree on a small island – was conveniently close to a public footpath allowing undisturbed views for many visitors. The spring was a good one for this southern heron in England and this stands as reasonable proof of its wild origins.

39 Grey Heron

Breeding records and highest county counts are given.

- E Waltham Abbey, 30 occupied nests, three more than in 1982 (TL). Walthamstow Res., 111 occupied nests, one less than in 1982 (AJG). West Thurrock, 56 on Nov. 30th (MKD,JMH,MS); a melanistic individual was present on July 9th (MKD).
- H Stocker's Lake, six pairs bred and at least eight young reared, this is an increase from three pairs in 1982; 27 on several dates in December (HB,ART).
- M Harefield Moor G.P., the total of 22 occupied nests was two more than in 1982, a successful breeding season was reported (JRB,JE). Syon Park, 18 on Dec. 29th (RBH). As in 1982 no reports were received concerning the Kempton Park heronry. Inner London: Regent's Park, nine pairs raised 24 young (TRDf).
- B Wraysbury G.P., 18 on Dec. 28th (TJD).
- K Bexley, eight or nine during the winter months (SJG). Dartford Marsh, eight on Oct. 2nd (DD).
- S Gatton Lake, eight pairs bred successfully (DAC). Barn Elms Res., ten on Nov. 13th, Dec. 3rd and 4th (RBH). Inner London: River Thames, one or two regularly observed flying along the river between Tower Bridge and Battersea Park (mo). Battersea Park, seven on Sept. 20th (HB).

42 White Stork

- M Hampstead Garden Suburb, one attempted to alight in a tree before it flew off NE on Apr. 15th (BD).

This is the ninth London record and the first since 1978.

44 Spoonbill

- E Rainham Marsh, one was seen and photographed in flight on Oct. 25th (JW).

1982 Additional Record

- S Beddington S.F., two adults on June 1st settled and fed for 30 minutes before departing again (SJD,SPJ).

These two records take the London total to 12; the Rainham record is the latest date for any sighting in London.

46 Mute Swan

The numbers of pairs reported nesting are shown below.

	Essex	Herts	Middx.	Inner London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	Total
1982	9	12	11	3	1	2	6	44
1983	7	15	23	1	2	2	20	70

It is impossible to judge whether or not the numbers represent a real increase over 1982 but the increase of more than three times in Surrey seems more likely to be the result of better coverage. Nevertheless, reported numbers have now increased for two years running and just exceed the 69 pairs found when there was a full census in 1978. Incomplete information was given on breeding success, but of the 45 pairs recorded in Essex, Herts. and Middlesex only nine (20%) were stated definitely to have been unsuccessful – this compares with a failure rate of 23% reported in 1982. The prospects for the species thus look much better than they did as recently as 1981. The larger counts in each sector are given.

- E At Rainham, c. 30 on the River Thames from May to August.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 44 in October. Rye Meads S.F., 42 in February and 47 in March.
- M Staines Res., 16 in September.
- B Queen Mother Res., 38 in June.
- K On the River Thames, 56 at Woolwich in July and 60 at Crossness in August.
- S Richmond Park, 22 in January. River Thames from Putney to Hampton Court, 22 in June.

47 Bewick's Swan

- E Fishers Green, one on Nov. 25th was still present in January 1984 (JF,MJO,GJW).
 - H Hilfield Park Res., one from Nov. 11th to 15th (SHM).
 - M Staines Res., three on Oct. 29th (RBH,AVM *et al.*).
 - B Wraysbury G.P., one flying SE on Nov. 12th (RRG).
- It is an interesting coincidence that the birds on Oct. 29th should be seen on the same day as four Whooper Swans in the Lea Valley.

48 Whooper Swan

- E Walthamstow Res., three immatures on Nov. 9th (JT).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., three adults and an immature on Oct. 29th (HPM).

47/48 Bewick's/Whooper Swan

- H Hertford, one flying E on Mar. 19th (TG).

51 White-fronted Goose

see also Appendix I

- E Fishers Green, three on Nov. 26th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, 30 on Dec. 19th (MKD).
- H Turnford Marsh G.P., three flying W on Nov. 26th (GJW).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Mar. 26th (AHH).
- S Barn Elms Res., an adult on a playing field on Nov. 13th was very wary (RBH,WR *et al.*).

53 Greylag Goose

All records relate to feral birds, progeny of introduced stock and ornamental collections in parks. Breeding records and largest counts are given. The autumn population has now reached c. 840 birds.

- E Walthamstow Res., two pairs reared nine young (JF).
- H Stocker's Lake, one pair reared nine young; max. 67 on Sept. 24th (DC *et al.*). Maple Cross S.F., 62 on Nov. 11th (MCRG). Mill End, 66

- on Sept. 17th (HB). West Hyde, max. 77 on Dec. 23rd (HB *et al.*).
 M Harefield Moor G.P., three pairs reared 11 young (JRB,JE); max. 62 on Aug. 31st (JE). See also Herts. above. Inner London: St. James's Park, three pairs bred, max. 79 on Dec. 17th (PJO).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., bred, present all year (originally introduced here); largest monthly count 659 on Sept. 18th and 20th, lowest 47 on Apr. 29th (AHH,RHT,JTr).
 S Gatton Park, one pair with nine young on June 19th (DAC).

49-53 Grey Goose *sp.*

1982 Additional Record

- M Hillingdon, *c.* 200 flew NE very high on Feb. 1st, possibly White-fronted Geese (JE).

55 Canada Goose

Minimum numbers of broods are summarized by county in the table and the largest counts for each sector are given under counties. As a result of wider coverage in the LNHS Breeding Census, the total of breeding birds is appreciably higher than in 1982. In the survey *c.* 1,250 goslings were recorded by observers (*per* HB).

	Essex	Herts.	Middx.	Inner London	Bucks.	Kent	Surrey	Total
Broods	62	51	65	17	2	10	92	299
Sites	12	15	27	5	1	5	38	103

Provisional figures from the mid-September Census of Population put the total for the London Area at around 2,774 birds (*per* HB).

- E Walthamstow Res., max. 337 on May 14th (ADL). Fishers Green, 153 on Feb. 12th (RL).
 H Amwell G.P., *c.* 200 on Sept. 18th (PJCr). Rye Meads S.F., *c.* 300 on Sept. 10th (RMRG). Stocker's Lake, 240 on July 11th (HB). West Hyde, 435 on Dec. 11th (HB).
 M Harefield Moor G.P., *c.* 320 on Dec. 27th (JRB), Queen Mary G.P., 200 on Aug. 27th (HRG). Staines Res., 405 on Sept. 15th (PAW). Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, maxima 229 on Feb. 16th, 280 on June 28th and 198 on Sept. 20th (HB,DAB). St. James's Park, max. 189 on Aug. 10th (PJO). Victoria Park, 38 on Aug. 26th (NB).
 B Wraysbury G.P., max. 65 on Jan. 16th and Oct. 16th (FRC *et al.*).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., max. 450 on Sept. 17th (JTr).
 S Barn Elms Res., 230 in November (NPS). Gatton Park, max. 265 on Oct. 6th (MKG). Holmethorpe S.P., max. 210 on Jan. 16th. Walton Res., 293 on Oct. 2nd (SDBWS). Inner London: Battersea Park, 160 on June 6th (HB).

57 Brent Goose

- E Rainham, six flying up the River Thames on Nov. 5th (NI). Wm. Girling Res., one on Nov. 19th (AJG).
 M Staines Res., seven on Apr. 11th (JAS).
 B Queen Mother Res., *c.* 50 flying SSE on Mar. 9th (Pgn). Wraysbury G.P., *c.* 47 flying S on Nov. 13th (FRC,Gcr,REM) were most probably of this species.
 K Dartford Marsh, 26 flying W on Nov. 6th (DD,RD) and one on Dec. 28th (SJG). Swanscombe Marsh, six on Nov. 27th (BMU), were most probably of this species.

- S Barn Elms Res., two on Nov. 12th (BPA, RBH, WR *et al.*). Queen Elizabeth II Res., three on a field on Dec. 17th (S. Spooner *per* SDBWS).

A good geographical spread of records, which mirrors the 1982 November peak; 80% of records were in November and December.

61 Shelduck

The extension of the species' range into the Thames Valley continues, though counts also include non-breeding and passage birds. During the early summer the drained north basin of Staines Res. attracted the highest concentration yet recorded in the London Area away from the Lower Thames.

Breeding records and peak counts are given.

- E Bred at Rainham Marsh (three pairs), Upminster (one pair), and West Thurrock (one pair). Attempted to breed at South Stifford (two pairs) and Fairlop (one pair). Monthly maxima at Rainham were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
110	140	164	82	70	100	150	40	50	268	150	150

Highest counts at Barking were 205 on Oct. 16th and 254 on Dec. 18th; and at Thurrock, 145 on Feb. 13th and 125 on Dec. 27th.

- H No breeding reported. Highest count: nine flying N at Cheshunt G.P. on Sept. 24th.

- M Bred at Perry Oaks S.F. (one pair) and Queen Mary G.P. (one pair). Monthly maxima at Staines Res. were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
17	19	20	26	38	59	6	4	5	8	7	2

Also recorded in breeding months at Bedfont Quarry, Harefield Moor G.P., Kempton East Res., King George VI Res. and Wraysbury Res.

- B Recorded at Old Slade N.R. and Wraysbury G.P. in May.
 K Bred at Dartford Marsh (one pair) and Thamesmead (two pairs). Present at Sevenoaks G.P. from March to May and at Stone Marsh in June. Counts from the south shore of the River Thames were lower than from the north shore: Crossness, max. 53 on Nov. 1st, and Dartford Marsh, 40 on Apr. 4th.
 S Recorded in breeding season at Hersham G.P. and Holmethorpe S.P., but no evidence of breeding. Elsewhere the species was scarce.

63 Mandarin

An introduction, breeding ferally since 1946 mainly in Surrey, now becoming established in north London. All breeding records are given and observations elsewhere summarized.

- E Epping Forest, five pairs bred (EFCC *et al.*).
 H St Albans, a pair from Dec. 12th to 18th (GN, JHT).
 M Southgate, a pair bred in a garden (APGg). Trent Park, a pair with young reported (*per* PJCR).
 B Wraysbury G.P., maxima 17 on Nov. 20th (AVM, PN) and 30 on Dec. 11th (PAW).
 K Eltham, one from Nov. 28th to Dec. 3rd (JW-C). Thamesmead, one on Dec. 16th (PE).

- S No reports were received from the principal breeding localities in Surrey. Epsom Common, at least one pair bred (ESB,RHK); others present in the neighbourhood (mo). Buckland S.P., unusually high numbers at roost in August and September, max. 105 on Aug. 27th (ID). Hurst Green, 30 on Jan. 1st (PEJ).

WILDFOWL

The indices of the monthly winter wildfowl counts for the five latest seasons, together with the highest monthly count for each species made in 1983/84, are given in Table 1. The bases of calculating the indices were explained in *LBR* 47:97. In view of the minimal number of Smew now occurring in the Area and the fact that full details of all records are published in the systematic list, the index for this species is no longer published.

Table 1. Index of mean winter wildfowl counts 1979/80 to 1983/84 and peak counts for 1983/84 (excluding Lower Thames).

	Indices					Peak Count	
	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1983/84	Month
Wigeon	117	127	141	115	185	399	Feb
Gadwall	122	145	162	153	183	294	Jan
Teal	167	138	131	134	145	1,705	Dec
Mallard	113	109	101	87	98	2,701	Dec
Shoveler	84	129	151	165	130	1,020	Sep
Pochard	340	82	90	37	70	1,262	Feb
Tufted	119	92	68	41	46	3,099	Feb
Goldeneye	93	110	128	89	98	267	Mar
Goosander	194	212	260	230	263	130	Feb

Numbers of all species except Shoveler increased on the previous season, but the aggregate of the peak counts was still only about 11,000, a very low figure by the standards of the past 20 years. Comments on individual species appear, in bold type, in the systematic list.

64 Wigeon

1983/84. See Table 1. Numbers increased markedly, the index reaching its highest level since 1956/57. Whereas numbers were only marginally up at the West Middlesex reservoirs, there were much bigger flocks than usual at Kempton and, in February, at Walton, 1983. The larger counts are given for each sector together with records for May and August. Generally much less widespread and, away from the Surrey and West Middlesex reservoirs, occurring in much smaller numbers than in recent years.

- E Rainham Marsh, max. 50 on Mar. 5th, otherwise c. 30 for the first three months of the year and again in December.
- H No counts from this sector exceeded ten. There was one at Hilfield Park Res. on Aug. 22nd.
- M Maxima at Staines Res. were 90-95 in January and February, two on July 11th and singles on Aug. 20th and 26th; at the end of the year there was a build-up from 111 on Dec. 3rd to 181 on 18th. King George VI Res., 98 in January and 125 in February. Harefield Moor G.P., two drakes on May 1st.
- K The only count to exceed ten was 13 at Sevenoaks G.P. in November.
- S Walton Res., 56 in November. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 67 in December. No other counts in this sector exceeded 13.

67 Gadwall

1983/84. See Table 1. After remaining on something of a plateau for three seasons, the index increased again to an all-time peak. The index understates the true increase, however, as synchronized monthly counts are not available from Cheshunt (H) where, in the past two seasons, large numbers of this species have appeared.

1983. Breeding was reported for the first time since 1980 and details of this and of other pairs in the breeding season are given, together with the larger counts in each sector. The flock at Cheshunt G.P. (H) reached record numbers for the London Area and in the Herts. and Middlesex sectors together there were totals of about 350 in November and 430 in December. By contrast, the numbers in Surrey, formerly the stronghold for this species in our area, never exceeded 70.

- E Ten at King George V Res., on Mar. 26th was the largest count in this sector.
- H A pair bred at Stocker's Lake (JRB,TRD) and another probably did so at Maple Cross S.F. where an adult and a juvenile were seen on July 11th (MCRG); two pairs summered at Cheshunt G.P. Very large numbers occurred at Cheshunt G.P. at the end of the year, 50 in September steadily increasing to a maximum of 125 on Nov. 13th, but decreasing thereafter to 60 in late December. Other counts in this sector in excess of 40 were: Rye Meads S.F., 43 in February and March and 55 in December. Stocker's Lake, 45 in December.
- M Queen Mary Res., 82-99 in January and February, 80 in November but a maximum of only 40 in December. King George VI Res., 59 in February and 69 in December. Staines Res., 39 in February, 52 in September and 64 in December; a pair was present there from May 22nd to June 7th. Little Britain Lake, 45 in December. Harefield Moor G.P., 31 in January and two pairs in early May. Wraysbury Res., 85 in December.
- B Queen Mother Res., 63 in January, 92 in February and 50 in November. Thorney Weir, 38 in December.
- K Ruxley G.P., a pair on Apr. 9th and July 31st. Priory Gardens, Orpington, 20 in September. Sevenoaks G.P., 17 in December.
- S Barn Elms Res., 37-38 in January and February and 29 in November. Island Barn Res., 25 in February.

69 Teal

1983/84. See Table 1. Although the index increased, numbers have not varied greatly for the past five seasons.

1983 There were no records suggestive of breeding, but details are given of pairs or females in the breeding season as well as the larger counts in each sector and a ringing recovery.

- E The peak winter monthly maxima at Rainham Marsh was as follows: January-700, February-1,000, March-300, October-500, November-500 and December-500; in addition five summered there. Other counts from the Lower Thames included 173 at Barking and 126 at Beckton both on Dec. 18th and c. 90 at Thurrock in January and February. A pair was present at Thurrock in May and June. A female found dead at Wm. Girling Res. on Oct. 16th had been ringed in Holland on Nov. 11th, 1974.
- H Numbers were generally low in this sector, the maximum being only 70 at Maple Cross S.F. in January and at Rye Meads S.F. in

December. Two were present at Maple Cross S.F. on June 4th and a female was at Rye Meads S.F. on May 22nd and June 12th.

M The large numbers at Staines Res. remained in the early months of the year and there was an even larger build-up at the end of the year, especially when the reservoir was being refilled in December. The winter monthly maxima were: January-456, February-155, March-203, April-150, September-338, October-491, November-400 and December-918. One or two remained from mid-May until mid-June when there was an unusually early influx of ten on June 18th and 20 by the end of that month. Counts elsewhere in this sector did not exceed 80. Inner London: Regent's Park, an apparently wild drake from Nov. 15th to 21st.

B The highest count in this sector was 27 at Thorney Weir in December.

K Littlebrook, 71 in January. Sevenoaks G.P., 57 in February and 53 in December.

S Winter monthly maxima at the principal localities were:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Barn Elms Res.	134	120	86	50	—	32	82	96
Queen Elizabeth II Res.	287	47	112	—	33	64	102	130
Walton Res.	100	122	68	—	—	—	14	24

Elsewhere there were 100 at Hogsmill S.F. on Nov. 26th and 41 at Island Barn Res. on Mar. 13th.

70 Mallard

1983/84. See Table 1. The index was at the second lowest level ever recorded, even though it increased by over 10% from the previous season's all-time low.

1983. Counts in excess of 300 are given or summarized, together with larger counts for Inner London, breeding concentrations in excess of ten broods and two late breeding records.

E Walthamstow Res., 455 on July 25th was presumably a moulting concentration. No other count in this sector exceeded 270.

H Park Street G.P., 352 in December. Apart from 200 at Tyttenhanger G.P. in November, other counts did not reach 150.

M Staines Res. attracted large numbers of this species when being refilled in November and December, the maxima for those two months being 381 and 881 respectively (APG). King George VI Res., 309 in January. Brent Res., 15 pairs bred successfully (LAB). Inner London: maxima at New River Walk were 271 in January and 227 in November; 14 broods were reported from this locality. Other breeding concentrations were at Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens (12+ broods) and St. James's Park (at least 29 broods), but at Regent's Park all the broods succumbed to botulism apart from six which hatched on Nov. 24th.

B All counts from this sector were below 200.

K Counts from this sector were all below 250.

S Gatton Lake, 350 in September and November and 370 in December. A brood of ten ducklings on Tooting Bec Common on Nov. 14th.

72 Pintail

Peak monthly counts for Lower Thames are given and records elsewhere are summarized. Reports of single birds may refer to birds of captive origin.

- E Rainham Marsh, peak monthly counts: 72 on Jan. 15th, 100 on Feb. 14th, 60 on Mar. 5th, four on Oct. 21st, 12 on Nov. 20th and 20 on Dec. 19th (MKD *et al.*).
- H Broxbourne G.P., four on Nov. 15th (LVPG). Single records elsewhere at three sites in September and December.
- M Staines Res., two present from Jan. 1st; between three and five from Feb. 20th to Mar. 20th; mostly singles in autumn between Aug. 11th and Nov. 9th; then winter influxes, with maxima ten on Nov. 12th and 27th and eight on Dec. 29th (mo). Single records elsewhere in winter months of up to two birds at four sites.
- K Thamesmead, highest count on the River Thames ten on Dec. 16th (PE).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Dec. 1st (BPA).

73 Garganey

Again no firm evidence of breeding was received, though a pair may have been present in Herts. First spring observation was on Mar. 26th, and the last in autumn on Nov. 19th; there have been two previous November records and one December record in the London Area. All records are given, but dates for Staines Res. have been summarized.

- E Fishers Green, one on Sept. 22nd (GJW). King George V Res., two on Aug. 27th (PJV). Netherhall G.P., one on June 25th and two from Sept. 3rd to 6th (AJG,GJW). Rainham Marsh, two on Aug. 6th and one on Sept. 3rd (MKD). Roydon, one on July 23rd (HPM). Wm. Girling Res., one on Aug. 5th (KHn).
- H Broxbourne G.P., two on Aug. 22nd (GJW). Colney Park, a male on Apr. 8th (JHT). London Colney, a pair from Mar. 26th to 27th, a pair on May 26th, a male on May 31st and a pair on June 10th (GN,JHT). Maple Cross S.F., one on Sept. 11th (MCRG). Rye Meads S.F., singles on July 20th and 22nd (RMRG). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on July 23rd and 24th (HPM). Stocker's Farm, a pair on June 4th (CIB,RRD,AVM). Stocker's Lake, one on Aug. 29th (DC).
- M Staines Res., singles on 17 dates between July 27th and Oct. 2nd (mo), and lastly a female on Nov. 19th (RJS); three on Aug. 7th (GMH) and two on several dates between Aug. 16th and Sept. 5th (GMH,RBH *et al.*). Brent Res., two from Aug. 25th to 28th and one on Sept. 4th (LAB). Kempton East Res., two on July 30th (AVM,PN) and one on Aug. 29th (GMH). Perry Oaks S.F., singles on Aug. 6th and 27th (TJD,PN). Shepperton G.P., a male on Mar. 20th (HWE).
- K Ruxley G.P., one on July 24th (SJG).
- S Beddington S.F., one on Aug. 3rd (DHH,GDJM). Gatton Lake, one on July 17th (DAC).

1980 Additional Record.

- H Folly Valley, Totteridge, a pair on Mar. 1st (ACW).

75 Shoveler

1983/84. See Table 1. After three seasons of increase the index dropped back, but it still represents an historically high level, having been exceeded in only three previous winters.

1983. Larger counts from each sector are given together with a breeding record and details of summering birds. The count of 78 in Battersea Park is the highest-ever Inner London count, and follows noticeably increasing totals in recent years.

- E Walthamstow Res., a pair bred; the peak count was 155 in September. West Thurrock, a pair in May; 40 in November was the highest Thameside count.
- H Hilfield Park Res., a pair on June 28th. Stocker's Lake, two drakes summered. The highest counts were of 105 at Cheshunt in November and 102 at Stocker's Lake in February.
- M Bedfont Quarry, a pair on May 21st. Staines Res., 256 in January but numbers dropped sharply at the end of the month and did not exceed 50 for the rest of the winter, one to eight from mid-May to mid-June. Numbers began to build up in the latter part of June (85 on 23rd) and there were 220 by Aug. 6th and up to 370 in September, but unlike Teal and Mallard they did not favour the reservoir when it was being refilled and numbers did not exceed 30 in the last two months of the year. Instead they were evidently attracted to King George VI Res. (390 in September and 296 in November) and/or Queen Mary Res. (304 in November and 374 in December). Wraysbury Res., 205 in December. Kempton East Res., 100 in March. Perry Oaks S.F., 100 in October. Inner London: Battersea Park, 78 in February. Regent's Park, 20 to the end of April with a return as early as June 7th, reaching 30 in October; St. James's Park, 30 on Jan. 5th and in March.
- B Old Slade N.R., 25 in December.
- K The only counts to reach double figures were 14 at Erith in January and 12 at Littlebrook G.P. in January and November.
- S Barn Elms Res., 186 in February. Lonsdale Road Res., 65 in November. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 70 in January and 136 in October.

76 Red-crested Pochard

All records probably relate to escapes from collections or their progeny. Truly wild birds may occur occasionally, coinciding with moult-flocking of Danish and other European birds in Holland and similar movements.

- M Shepperton G.P., a female on Sept. 22nd and Oct. 11th (HWE).
- K Danson Park, Eltham, one on Feb. 13th (KHP). Kelsey Park, Beckenham, one on Nov. 18th (GDN).
- S Lonsdale Road and Barn Elms Res., a female and five immatures in mid-July; a male, a female and four immatures present in autumn until the end of year (RBH,WR,ADT *et al.*).

77 Pochard

1983/84. See Table 1. After the collapse in numbers in 1982/83, the index reverted almost to the level of the immediately preceding seasons.

1983. Numbers remained at something of a low ebb, no count at any locality reaching 250; only one moult-gathering flock was reported (from Queen Mary G.P.). Larger counts and breeding season records are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., 175 in December. Twelve broods were recorded from that locality and there were single broods at Walthamstow Marsh, Berwick Ponds and Ockendon; in addition two pairs summered at West Thurrock.
- H The largest count in this sector was of c. 80 at Hilfield Park Res. in October. Single broods were recorded from Maple Cross S.F., Rye Meads S.F., Stanstead Abbots G.P., Stocker's Lake and the River

Lea between Rye House and Stanstead Abbots.

- M Staines Res., 221 in January, 252 in November and 214 in December. Queen Mary G.P., 236 in August. Harefield Moor G.P., 180 in December. One brood was reported from Harefield Moor G.P. and two from Brent Res. Three pairs summered at Osterley Park but there was no evidence of breeding. Inner London: Regent's Park, 15 pairs nested. St. James's Park, three broods.
- B Wraybury G.P., 111 in January and 139 in November.
- K Ruxley G.P., 108 in November.
- S Barn Elms Res., 152 in October and 130 in November; a pair was seen there in late May and early June but there was no evidence of breeding.

79 Ferruginous Duck

Most English records relate to escapes from collections. Additionally, confusing hybrids also occur. Observers are asked to submit full descriptions, including details of bill pattern.

- E Walthamstow Res., a female on Dec. 31st (MDT) stayed until January 1984.
- H Cheshunt G.P., a male from Sept. 17th to Oct. 23rd (BW, GJW *et al.*).
- M Little Britain Lake, a male (as in previous years) present until Apr. 1st and from Nov. 13th until the end of year (mo).
- S Barn Elms Res., a male hybrid on Feb. 19th (RBH) resembling Ferruginous, but with features suggesting Ferruginous X Tufted Duck parentage.

80 Tufted Duck

1983/84. See Table 1. As with Pochard, numbers recovered somewhat, but they were still lower than at any time since the 1950s.

1983. The number of breeding sites and minimum number of broods reported were as follows:

		Essex	Herts	Middx	Inner London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	Total
1982	broods	75	73	15	35	4	5	15	222
	sites	11	12	6	5	2	4	7	47
1983	broods	63	63	22	26	—	8	8	190
	sites	11	9	9	3	—	5	3	40

Although fewer sites than in 1982 were apparently covered, all the principal waters were visited and it seems that brood numbers were certainly down at most localities. The numbers for Inner London exclude Regent's Park where 20 pairs nested, but no young survived. Concentrations in excess of ten broods were reported from: (E) Netherhall G.P. — 16; Walthamstow Res. — 26; (H) Amwell G.P. — 13; Rye Meads S.F. — 36; (M) Brent Res. — 13; (IL) St. James's Park — 24.

There were fewer counts than in 1982 during the moult period so no clear picture of numbers emerges. The larger counts (all in August) were: (E) Walthamstow Res., Wm. Girling Res. and King George V Res. combined — 1,300; (M) Queen Mary Res. — 740; (S) Barn Elms Res. — 289; Walton Res. — 600. Very few birds were present in August at Staines Res. (M), but there were 400 there on July 23rd. Outside this period, numbers were again very low, only two localities holding more than 500. Larger counts in each sector are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., 610 in November and December.
 H Cheshunt G.P., 265 in March and 220 in November. Rye Meads S.F., 357 in September and 251 in November.
 M Staines Res., 484 in March and 323 in December. Harefield Moor G.P., 300 in February. Inner London: St. James's Park, 318 in January.
 B Wraysbury G.P., 841 in January and 982 in November.
 K Thamesmere Lake, Thamesmead, 180 in November.
 S Barn Elms Res., 274 in February and 385 in December. Thorpe Water Park, 450-500 from September to November.

81 Scaup

Very few records were received. Observers are again reminded of the similarity of certain hybrids to Scaup. Full descriptions, including bill patterns and head sheens, should be submitted whenever possible. Details of hybrids are also useful. All records are given.

- M Harefield Moor G.P., two males and a female from Mar. 26th to Apr. 15th (JE,IGJ *et al.*). Perry Oaks S.F., two males and a female on Apr. 4th (JAS) may relate to the previous record. Staines Res., a female from Feb. 5th to Mar. 27th (PN *et al.*). Stoke Newington Res., a male on Dec. 17th (TG).

86 Long-tailed Duck

- E King George V Res., a female from Dec. 3rd (MKD,JF,PJV) remained into 1984.
 S Island Barn Res., a female or immature from Nov. 20th (ML *et al.*) also remained into 1984.

A typical showing following a complete absence of records in 1982 – the first blank year since 1957.

87 Common Scoter

- E King George V Res., three on Apr. 4th and 14 on July 17th (DSK,PJV). Walthamstow Res., singles on Apr. 7th and May 30th (AJG,CGN). Wm. Girling Res., three on Apr. 4th (additional to the King George V record) and one on June 26th (PJV).
 H Amwell G.P., one on Nov. 13th (GJW). Hilfield Park Res., singles on Apr. 4th and Sept. 24th (CIB,PAW).
 M Finchley, one picked up at College Farm on Oct. 1st was later released at Stoke Newington Res. on Oct. 3rd (*per* NB,RAH). King George VI Res., two on Apr. 4th and one on Nov. 13th (GMH,PN *et al.*). Staines Res., one on July 23rd (AVM,PN *et al.*). Wraysbury Res., two on Nov. 13th (AVM).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., 25 on July 23rd (AHH,DRHE), the second largest flock for the London Area (the highest being 79 at Walthamstow Res. on Nov. 6th 1980).

This sea-duck can appear at almost any time of year, but this year's records neatly encapsulate the typical pattern of inland occurrences nationwide. Five records in early April coincided with up-Channel movements; four mid-summer records, including two notable flocks, and a small movement in mid-November.

91 Goldeneye

1983/84. See Table 1. The index recovered after the sharp fall in the previous season but it is still well below the peaks reached in 1980/81 and 1981/82.

1983. Large counts are given. There were no Inner London records.

- E King George V and Wm. Girling Res., 23 on Jan. 7th, 35 on Mar. 19th, 30 on Apr. 9th and 35 from Nov. 12th until the end of the year. Nazeing G.P., ten on Mar. 7th.
- H Broxbourne G.P., up to 11 in January and December. Stocker's Lake, maxima 14 on Feb. 8th and 12 on Dec. 26th. Recorded at eight other sites, but no count exceeded six birds.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., 16 on Feb. 12th. King George VI Res., 20 on Feb. 19th, 38 on Mar. 20th, 81 on Apr. 4th, 23 on Nov. 13th. Queen Mary Res., 63 on Jan. 30th, 60 on Feb. 20th, 45 on Mar. 13th, 35 on Nov. 13th and 12 on Dec. 11th. Springwell Lake, 12 on Dec. 27th. Staines Res., 18 on Jan. 30th, 26 on Feb. 19th, 52 on Mar. 13th, 53 on Mar. 16th, 13 on Nov. 6th and 14 on Dec. 18th.
- B Queen Mother Res., nine on Dec. 4th. Wraysbury G.P., 21 on Jan. 16th, 37 on Feb. 13th and 21 on Mar. 6th.
- K Recorded at three sites, but no count exceeded two birds.
- S Walton Res., 21 on Jan. 23rd, 32 on Feb. 13th, 74 on Mar. 13th, 83 on Mar. 20th and 21 on Nov. 13th. Recorded at four other sites, but generally counts did not exceed six birds.

93 Smew

1983. All records are given or summarized. All records refer to redheads unless otherwise stated.

- H Maple Cross S.F., one on Dec. 24th (MCRG). Royal Oak G.P., one on Dec. 27th (RDNHS). Stocker's Lake, one on Dec. 22nd (ART).
- M Hampton Pumping Station, one on Jan. 3rd (APM) and one from Nov. 5th until late December (ML *et al.*). Harefield Moor G.P., one on Feb. 20th (BBC) and singles on Dec. 18th and 26th (JE). Kempton Park Res., singles on Nov. 26th and Dec. 4th (Pct,JO). Queen Mary G.P., one on Feb. 26th (HRG). Shepperton G.P., a male on Dec. 26th (HWE).
- B Horton G.P., two (one drake) on Jan. 25th and seven (three drakes) on Feb. 20th (CB,IGJ). Wraysbury G.P., present on many dates from Jan. 1st to Mar. 17th, maxima four (two drakes) on Jan. 9th and five (two drakes) on Feb. 27th; present from Dec. 16th, maximum four (one drake) on Dec. 18th (mo).

1981 Additional Record

- M Brent Res. singles on Jan. 7th, 8th and 12th (ACW).

1982 Additional Records

- M Brent Res., one on Feb. 6th (WRD). Queen Mary Res., one on Jan. 16th (HRG). Queen Mary G.P., three on Jan. 30th, two on Feb. 20th, three on Feb. 27th (HRG).

94 Red-breasted Merganser

- M Staines Res., single females or immatures on Nov. 6th and Dec. 4th (GMH,RBH,ART).
- S Barn Elms Res., two females or immatures on Sept. 21st, an early date (RBH).

95 Goosander

1983/84. See Table 1. Although the peak count (in February) was lower than in the previous season, better numbers occurred in

December and January and in consequence the index increased to its highest level since the severe winter of 1978/79.

1983. Peak counts and locality summaries are given.

- E King George V and Wm. Girling Res., 13 on Feb. 12th, 19 on Mar. 26th, five on Apr. 14th, 11 on Nov. 26th and 20 on Dec. 20th.
- H Amwell G.P., one in early January. Cheshunt G.P., nine on Feb. 24th and two on Apr. 2nd. Hilfield Park Res., one on Feb. 13th.
- M Bedfont Quarry, two on Feb. 19th. King George VI Res., 25 on Jan. 16th, 40 on Feb. 12th, 16 on Mar. 12th and eight on Dec. 4th. Queen Mary G.P., 27 on Dec. 31st. Queen Mary Res., 31 on Jan. 23rd, 66 on Feb. 13th, 43 on Mar. 1st, 23 on Mar. 20th, six on Nov. 26th and ten on Dec. 29th. Staines Res., 24 on Jan. 8th, six on Feb. 13th, seven on Mar. 13th, ten on Nov. 13th, 29 on Nov. 18th, 52 on Nov. 29th, 69 on Dec. 6th, but falling to ten by end of year. Wraysbury Res., 30 on Feb. 13th, 42 on Feb. 20th, ten on Mar. 13th and 20 on Dec. 29th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., max. three on Feb. 13th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Feb. 12th.
- S Barnes, three flying up the River Thames on Dec. 2nd. Barn Elms Res., singles in February and December. East Molesey, ten on River Ember on Feb. 6th. Hersham G.P., seven on Feb. 6th and six on Mar. 13th. Holmethorpe S.P., one on Feb. 6th. Island Barn Res., eight on Jan. 16th, six on Feb. 13th, four on Mar. 13th, four on Nov. 13th and 26 on Dec. 18th. Lonsdale Road Res., one until Feb. 12th. Walton Res., 19 on Jan. 23rd, and eight on Mar. 27th.

96 Ruddy Duck

A pair bred in Middlesex, the second breeding record for the London Area. Observations continue to increase, particularly in the winter months. All localities are given, but occurrences at regular sites in the Colne Valley are summarized.

- E King George V Res., one on Nov. 13th (CF).
- H Stocker's Lake, a pair on Apr. 21st and up to four birds in May (RRD *et al.*). In autumn recorded on many dates, with maxima seven on Dec. 22nd and 27th (ART). Troy Mill G.P., one on Dec. 25th (RRD).
- M One pair bred in this sector, and reared two young successfully. Brent Res., two from Apr. 17th to 24th and on May 1st (LAB,RAH,DAW). Hampton Res., eight on Jan. 3rd (APM). Harefield Moor G.P., recorded on many dates from Jan. 1st to Apr. 15th, with maxima of ten on Jan. 3rd and seven on Jan. 28th (TRD,IGJ *et al.*); singles on May 28th (JE) and Oct. 10th (PAW) and three on Dec. 27th (JRB). Kempton East Res., 12 on Feb. 5th and two on Oct. 29th (JQ). Queen Mary G.P., one from Sept. 6th to Oct. 8th (HRG). Staines Res., singles on July 23rd (MJW) and Aug. 30th (KHN,GAR) and two on Dec. 7th (IGJ). Stain Hill Res., five on Dec. 26th (ML).
- B Wraysbury G.P., singles on Dec. 18th and 24th (FRC,AVM,PN).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., singles on Mar. 31st and Oct. 3rd and five on Sept. 20th (AHH *et al.*).
- S Walton Res., one on Nov. 17th (SDBWS). Thorpe Water Park, one on Nov. 13th (DKJW).

1981 Additional Record

- M Brent Res., one on Sept. 9th (ACW).

1982 Additional Record

- M Queen Mary G.P., four on Aug. 11th, two staying until Sept. 16th, and a single on Oct. 9th (HRG).

99 Red Kite

H Croxley Hall, one on Jan. 8th (MJHN).

The second winter record of this splendid raptor which has now appeared in every year since 1979; the total now stands at 12 for the London Area.

103 Marsh Harrier

E Romford, a female on May 6th (MKD). Rainham Marsh, a female or immature on four dates between July 27th and Sept. 17th (NI,KB).

M Staines Res., a female on May 16th (IGJ *et al.*). Stanwell, a female or immature on Sept. 26th (MJW).

B Wraysbury G.P., a female or immature on May 11th flew W (AVM).
An excellent showing only bettered by the seven records in 1979; this species has now appeared in every year since 1976 – preceded by an eight year gap. The total now stands at 32.

104 Hen Harrier

E Rainham Marsh, a male on Feb. 13th, a female on Oct. 8th, two females on Oct. 10th and up to three throughout November and December, with another male there from Dec. 24th to 31st (MKD *et al.*).

M Staines Res., a male on Oct. 30th flew off N (FRC,REM).

K Dartford Marsh, a 'ring-tail' on Nov. 11th and throughout December (AM, mo).

108 Sparrowhawk

E Reported from ten localities mostly involving single birds and mainly in the winter months; a possible breeding pair, one in May and another in July being the exceptions.

H Records came from over 30 localities, mainly in the winter months, but present all year round in at least one locality and a pair were reported breeding in July at another site; otherwise recorded once in June and three times in July.

M More records than last year with reports from over 36 localities, again a quarter of those from Staines Res. On top of this is the first definite breeding success in the county for over 20 years – an unsuccessful attempt was made in 1981 – with one pair fledging two young.

Another pair was reported as nesting and a third pair as breeding although the outcome was unknown. Apart from these there were mid-summer records from only one other locality.

- B Reported from only three localities, an increase of one from the previous year. However, at one site—the same as that in 1982 – a pair was present all the year round and may have even bred. In May a female was seen to enter a tree which appeared to contain a nest but the tree was blown down in a gale soon after. Following on from this on June 24th two young were reported from the same area.
- K As in 1982 well distributed in the winter months with records from 21 sites and up to three at two localities. There were three mid-summer records, one from a well-favoured locality with records in almost every month.
- S A minimum of six breeding pairs with an additional, possibly unsuccessful, pair at another locality – a great improvement on the situation last year. There were five other records of birds seen in the summer months and from 22 localities in the winter.

109 Buzzard

- H Hertford, one on Jan. 26th (FCB).
 M Stanwell, one flew NE on Aug. 31st (MJW).
 B Old Slade N.R., one on Feb. 2nd (CJB).

Three in one year is close to the recent yearly average.

113 Osprey

- E King George V Res., one on Apr. 17th was also seen in Herts. (KM,CF).
 H Amwell G.P., and Broxbourne G.P., one flew N on Apr. 17th was the same bird seen in Essex (TPA,CCL,LVPG). Rye Meads S.F., one flew N on Apr. 30th (AH,BT,TS).
 M Friern Barnet, one flew N on Apr. 18th (RB).
 B Queen Mother Res., one on Sept. 4th (EEG).
 S Chessington Zoo, one flew S on May 17th (AJP,KGS). Wallington, one flew N on Apr. 15th (MRW).

Another very good year on-a-par with 1982 and only just below the record high of eight in one year – 1976. Once again the predominance of spring records far exceeds the sole autumn record reversing the trend of former years.

115 Kestrel

	Essex	Herts	Mx/Bucks.	Inner London	Kent	Surrey	Totals
Proved breeding	12	1	6	—	3	9	31
Possible breeding	8	1	12	7	3	13	44

75

After last year's unexpected high of 99 pairs a return to a more usual total of records, well within the range of fluctuation set in recent years of between 63 and 99. In addition there were mid-summer records of birds in at least 14 other localities in Kent, three in Herts., and nine in Surrey all worthy of consideration for inclusion in the above totals – which would then give a picture almost identical to last year. However, particularly disappointing this year is the apparent failure of birds to breed successfully in Inner London, for the first time in the last 20 years. This lack of success, whether apparent or real, follows a notable decline in recent years and to a degree must be

a reflection of the numbers in the centre of the capital. In the past observers have usually had suspicions confirmed by the eventual sighting of young near or flying around the site. On a more promising note two pairs in Surrey utilised nest boxes especially put up for them.

All Inner London breeding season records are given below:

Barnsbury Estate, one pair probably bred here or nearby (TG). Battersea Park/Power Station, one pair present April to July, seen displaying May 25th (TG,Pct). Carlton Tower Hotel, SW1, one pair probably bred; present from March to December (DKJW). Compton Terrace, one pair probably bred (TG). Cadogan Place, SW1, one soaring with prey on July 12th (PJS). Haggerston Park, E8, one seen hunting in May and July (SES). Surrey Docks, a male and female on several dates in April and June (DAM). Vauxhall/Waterloo/Lambeth/St. Thomas's Hospital/Houses of Parliament/Whitehall, possibly two pairs present, of which one pair probably bred on Lambeth North church (GM,PJS).

118 Merlin

E Rainham Marsh, a female on Feb. 14th (MKD).

A poor showing, the first year since 1978 with only one record.

119 Hobby

For the first time since 1977 a pair bred successfully. In addition to this birds were seen in several other possible breeding areas during the summer months. Overall a slight increase in the number of records though only two in Essex was surprisingly few; singles unless otherwise stated.

E Berwick Ponds, May 1st (MKD) and Walthamstow Res., May 9th (PF).

H One pair bred successfully, and also reported from 17 other localities. Whilst mid-summer records may refer to the breeding birds there were at least six reports away from that area (PGN,FCB).

M Apart from Staines Res., records came from nine other localities with three together at Harefield on Sept. 10th (RDNHS). At Staines Res. birds were present on many dates during the spring and autumn hunting hirundines, though much less so during the summer months; extreme dates here were Apr. 20th and Sept. 26th. A family party of one adult and three juveniles here on Aug. 30th (KHn) is particularly noteworthy giving rise to further speculation of breeding within the Area. Inner London: Belgrave Square, SW1, one flew SW on May 19th (Pct).

B Queen Mother Res., May 4th (JE). Wraybury G.P., singles on five dates between May 6th and July 21st with three on May 10th and at least two on May 14th (RRG *et al.*).

K One pair summered on suitable breeding territory and there were occasional mid-summer records from two other localities.

S There were mid-summer records from four localities but none on suitable territory. It appears that the former breeding site of the mid-1970s has been deserted as there were no records again from that area. Most records referred to birds on hunting forays.

123 Peregrine

See also Appendix I

- E Rainham Marsh, a female on Oct. 29th (MKD).
 M West Drayton, a first-year bird on Sept. 11th (TJD).

Some uncertainty shrouds the origins of many of London's recent records of this species; it is however increasing nationally and the two sightings this year are on appropriate dates.

129 Red-legged Partridge

Distribution of pairs in the breeding season and large counts are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, six pairs. Dagnam Park, one pair. Fairlop, three pairs. Hainault/Havering, eight pairs. Navestock, six pairs, Ockendon, one pair. Rainham Marsh, three pairs. Ockendon, 69 on Jan. 22nd. Bulphan Fen, 22 on Oct. 23rd.
 H Croxley Mill, one pair. Great Westwood, 35+ on Oct. 15th.
 M Mill Hill, one pair. Osterley Park, one pair. Perry Oaks S.F., one pair. Dyrham Park, six on Jan. 23rd and the same number in Osterley Park in December.
 K At Dartford Marsh only very poor numbers reported with up to three all year and a noticeable decline over the last five years. Crayford Marsh, seven on Dec. 19th.
 S Godstone N.R., 12 on Oct. 20th.

130 Grey Partridge

Breeding season localities (one pair unless otherwise stated) and coveys of over five are given.

- E Barking, two pairs. Beckton. Berwick Ponds, two pairs. Hainault/Havering, two pairs. Ockendon. Purfleet. Rainham Marsh. Romford. Upminster. Barking, 19 on Nov. 20th. Ockendon, 10 on Dec. 12th. Purfleet, 12 on Oct. 9th. Rainham Marsh, 10 on Nov. 6th. West Thurrock, eight on Nov. 11th.
 H Broxbourne G.P., one pair bred and 13 there on Oct. 2nd. Hatfield, regular in coveys of up to 14 and a total of 22 in three coveys on Dec. 11th. Stanborough, 28 on Nov. 14th. Tyttenhanger G.P., up to 12 on Oct. 29th.
 M Bushy Park. Harefield. Harmondsworth/Sipson, at least two pairs. Osterley Park, between 10 and 12 pairs. Harmondsworth, nine on Dec. 11th. Queen Mary G.P., six on Nov. 12th. Shepperton G.P., 18 on Aug. 7th.
 S Richmond Park, present all year but one observer commented that it was 'much scarcer than in the late 1960s'. Broadham Green, 12 on Nov. 19th.

131 Quail

- M Barn Hill, Wembley, one heard and seen on June 5th and 6th (LAB, RB, DAW).
 The first record for four years, almost to the day, since the last one in June 1979.

133 Pheasant

Present all year round in most suitable localities especially in 'Green-Belt' country. Several large gatherings are worthy of note.

- E Sewardstone, 50 in a pen ready for release, presumably for shooting purposes on Aug. 6th.
 H Abbots Langley, 18 on Oct. 6th. Great Westwood, at least 20 in

October and at least 60 in December. Rye Meads S.F., max. of 20 in December.

136 Water Rail

Well reported in the winter months and through to late March and April with the last on May 10th, no mid-summer records; the first returning birds arrived in early August. In the second winter period at least five localities held small concentrations of up to five birds. All sites of winter occurrence are given (singles unless otherwise stated).

- E Berwick Ponds, Dagenham, Fishers Green, Rainham Marsh (4).
- H Amwell G.P., Broxbourne G.P. (2), Cassiobury Park (5), Cheshunt G.P. (5), Maple Cross S.F., Park Street, Rye House Marsh, Rye Meads S.F. (5), Stocker's Lake (2).
- M Alexandra Park, Bedfont Quarry (3), Brent Res. (2), Dyrham Park, Harefield Moor G.P., Queen Mary G.P., Ruislip Local N.R., Staines Moor.
- B Horton G.P. (4), Old Slade N.R., Wraysbury G.P. (2).
- K Beckenham, Dartford Marsh, Foots Cray Meadows (3), Littlebrook, Ruxley G.P. (3), Sevenoaks G.P.
- S Barn Elms Res., Buckland S.P., Epsom Common (3), Hersham S.F., Holmethorpe S.P., Waddon Ponds.

1980 Additional Record.

- M Brent Res., two throughout November.

1982 Additional Record.

- M Brent Res., max. of seven on Jan. 16th.

137 Spotted Crake

- E Sewardstone, one from Sept. 24th to 26th (DS,PR *et al.*).

A fairly typical date for a migrant to appear; the fifth year in succession this species has been recorded in the London Area.

141 Corncrake

- E Walthamstow Marsh, one on Sept. 28th and 29th (TG).

The last London sightings of this species were in 1980 (one record) and 1976 (four records) and the latter records were the first since 1968; this accurately reflects the demise of the species nationwide in the face of modern farming techniques. All but one of the records in the last 20 years has been in autumn.

142 Moorhen

Large counts and Inner London breeding records are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, 60+ in January and December. Corbets Tey, 50 in February.
- H Maple Cross S.F., 55 on Feb. 25th. Old Parkbury, c. 50 on Nov. 19th. Rye Meads S.F., max. of 122 on Nov. 27th.
- M Little Britain Lake, max. of 70 on Nov. 20th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, at least three pairs bred successfully. New River Walk, one pair bred. Regent's Canal, one pair bred. St. James's Park, at least two pairs bred.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., up to 37 from January to March and a max. of 39 in December.
- S Beddington S.F., 45 in January and 40 in December. Kew Gardens, 75 in December.

142× Moorhen×Coot hybrid**145**

- K Lamorbey Park, Sidcup, an apparent hybrid on May 30th had a Coot's bill and Moorhen's flanks and tail (KHP).

The recent correspondence in *British Birds* 76: 407-410 and the rarity of these hybrids, together with their similarity to American Coot, make this record of especial interest.

145 Coot

Once again consistent counts of this species were made on the winter wildfowl counts and the approximate monthly totals (unadjusted for waters missed) for the two latest seasons were as follows:

	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>
1982/83	3,100	4,300	4,600	3,400	3,900	2,500	2,100
1983/84	4,000	4,300	4,100	4,000	3,900	3,300	1,800

Between one-third and one-half of the 1983/84 figures are accounted for by records from the Lea Valley Reservoirs (E) and Shepperton G.P. (M).

Sample large counts are given for sectors and comparative figures for some Inner London parks.

- E Walthamstow Res., 309 on Feb. 27th, 599 on July 25th, 910 on Sept. 18th, 483 on Oct. 16th, 497 on Nov. 13th and 514 on Dec. 18th.
- H A total of 126 breeding pairs was reported from this sector. Cheshunt G.P., 350 on Feb. 13th, 830 on Oct. 16th, 825 on Nov. 13th, 695 on Dec. 18th. Rye Meads S.F., 373 in January and 465 in September.
- M Queen Mary Res., max. 492 on Jan. 30th. Staines Res., max. 256 on Dec. 18th. Stocker's Lake, max. 440 on Oct. 25th and 480 on Dec. 25th. Stoke Newington Res., max. 362 on Jan. 4th. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, 76 on Mar. 14th and 90 on Oct. 18th. St. James's Park, at least 19 nests; max. count 113 on Dec. 17th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., max. 360 on Dec. 18th.
- K Ruxley G.P., max. 123 on Dec. 13th. Sevenoaks G.P., maxima 240 on Sept. 30th and 236 on Dec. 4th.
- S A total of at least 90 breeding pairs was reported in this sector. Barn Elms Res., monthly maxima 220 in January, 250 in February, 223 in March, 260 in September, 420 in October, 550 in November and 363 in December. Thorpe Water Park, max. 308 on Dec. 18th.

151 Oystercatcher

- E King George V Res., singles on Mar. 13th (PR) and Apr. 4th (PJV). Rainham Marsh, five on Mar. 12th (MKD), and then a pair in April and May which bred, hatching one chick from two eggs, but which subsequently died (JW). West Thurrock, two or three between March and July may have bred (MKD, JMH *et al.*). Walthamstow Res., two on Mar. 24th (PE). Wm. Girling Res., two on Aug. 4th (PJV).
- H Amwell G.P., two on Mar. 3rd (LVPG). Cheshunt G.P., one on Nov. 5th (LVPG). Rye Meads S.F., one flew E on Aug. 24th (RMRG). Stanborough Lake, one on Mar. 12th (PL).
- M Brent Res., one on Aug. 25th (LAB). Staines Res., reported on the following dates (singles unless otherwise stated):— Feb. 20th, Mar. 3rd, Mar. 9th, Mar. 12th, Apr. 22nd (two), Apr. 23rd, May 1st, May 6th, May 20th (two), May 22nd (two), May 30th, June 4th, July 2nd, Aug. 13th, Sept. 4th and Sept. 21st (mo). Queen Mary Res., one on Oct. 30th (HRG).
- K Dartford Marsh, one on Aug. 10th (RD,DD). River Thames at

Crossness/Thamesmead, one on June 14th, two on June 17th and July 15th (PE), and one on Aug. 15th (PJS). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 8th (AHH).

- S Barnes, one flew W on July 7th (RBH). Queen Elizabeth II Res., one on Mar. 20th (ML).

The first proved breeding at Rainham Marsh since 1977. Not often thought of as an escape, a bird which was seen on the track of Crystal Palace Stadium on Aug. 29th during an athletics match had in fact come from the local Crystal Palace Park Zoo.

153 Avocet

- E Rainham Marsh, three on July 29th (NI,TWT). Walthamstow Res., six on May 1st (DDe).
 H Amwell G.P., five on May 1st (AFA), part of the same flock first seen at Walthamstow.
 M Staines Res., one of the two present between Dec. 24th and 28th 1982 remained until Jan. 2nd (mo); a further three on Mar. 3rd (GMH,JAS), one on May 6th (mo), and two on June 2nd (GMH).
 S Holmethorpe S.P., seven on Apr. 4th (RWHS).

The largest ever influx in spring, with six records involving some 19 birds. The spread of records between March and June is typical.

156 Collared Pratincole

- M Staines Res., one on June 19th (FRC,AVM,PN *et al.*).

During this bird's three hour stay it was also seen in flight over King George VI Res. and Staines Moor, although all observations were made from Staines Res. Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the third pratincole to be seen in the London Area, but the first to be specifically identified.

158 Little Ringed Plover

Records of pairs in the breeding season are given in the table below.

	Sites	Pairs proved breeding	Other pairs present	Total
E	10	11	4	15
H	8	15	5	20
M	9	12	8	20
B	3	2	1	3
K	2	0	2	2
S	4	2	2	4
Totals	36	42	22	64

A slight increase when compared with the figures for 1982, although the amount of information provided by observers must vary greatly from year-to-year. The earliest arrival was at Rye Meads S.F., where there was one on Mar. 12th (BT). A large number of pairs was again concentrated at a site near Hatfield, with nine successful pairs, and the temporarily drained Staines Res. north basin held at least four pairs. Another site in Middx. held six successful pairs. Late summer saw the usual build-up of dispersing flocks, the largest counts being 52 at Rainham Marsh on July 9th (MKD), 21 at Kempton East Res. on July 23rd, and 20+ at Staines Res. on July 28th (AVM,PN). A very late immature was still at Staines Res. on Oct. 14th (BAR).

159 Ringed Plover

A total of 13 pairs held territories, seven away from the River

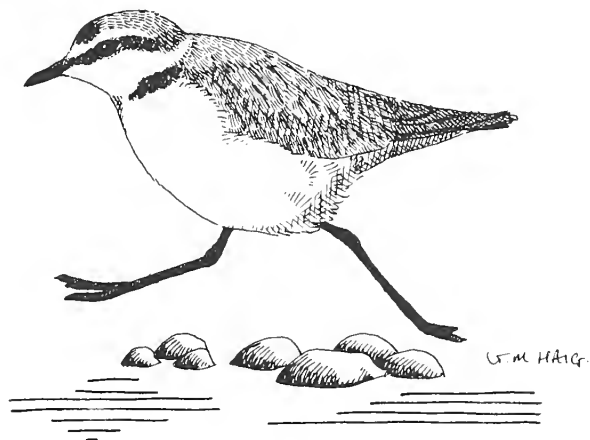
Thames. Analysis of records shows the usual influx to breeding sites in February and March, a good movement of migrants passing through the Area in late May, and return passage in autumn showing a typical peak in August, followed by a second wave in late September — the latter coinciding with the main passage of Little Stints and Curlew Sandpipers. Breeding season records, wintering birds at inland sites, and the highest counts are given below.

- E Hornchurch, one pair bred. Rainham Marsh, a pair reared young. West Thurrock, one pair bred. Upminster, a nest was found with two eggs. Highest counts from the two favourite localities along the Lower Thames are given in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marsh	25	100	25	14	43	12	40	60	86	83	—	—
West Thurrock	42	100	18	2	2	2	30	150	150	140	50	200

- H Amwell G.P., two in June. Near Hatfield, one pair bred for the second successive year.
- M Kempton East Res., one pair bred. Perry Oaks S.F., 15 on Sept. 23rd. Staines Res., present throughout the period from Feb. 2nd to Oct. 10th, with at least two pairs breeding successfully. The largest flocks of migrants were 22 on Mar. 3rd, 20 on Apr. 17th, 42+ on May 29th, 24 on Aug. 24th, and 31 on Sept. 23rd.
- B Queen Mother Res., one on Dec. 18th, and three on Dec. 24th.
- K Dartford Marsh, two pairs were present in May; 15 on Aug. 10th. Swanscombe Marsh, 24 on Jan. 23rd, and up to 15 at the end of the year. A pair was present in May and June. Thamesmead, a pair attempted to breed.
- S Beddington S.F., nine on Sept. 25th. Barn Elms Res., one on Nov. 9th.

161 Kentish Plover



- E Rainham Marsh, one on Apr. 24th (NI).
- M Staines Res., females on Apr. 10th (CJH, JAH *et al.*), Apr. 22nd (IGJ, GAR *et al.*), and May 16th (R. J. Johns *et al.*) and a male on June 12th (GMH, AVM, PN *et al.*).

These five different individuals compare with only 16 previous records in London this century. The attraction Staines Res. had for waders in the spring is obvious. It is worth noting that not one spring Kentish Plover in the London Area has stayed longer than a day.

165 Golden Plover

Reported up to Apr. 20th, and from July 24th. The largest flocks

were mostly confined to the north and east of the Area. Kent and Surrey produced only four records of singles between them. The highest counts are given.

- E Bulphan Fen, 150 on Jan. 23rd, and 50 on Dec. 4th. Epping, 150 on Dec. 27th. Fairlop, 200 on Feb. 5th, 340 on Dec. 4th, and 150 on Dec. 28th. Fishers Green, 130 on Feb. 13th. Hainault, c.600 on Dec. 31st. Ockendon, 80 on Jan. 22nd. Roydon, 45 on Feb. 13th.
- H Colney Heath G.P., c.20 on Apr. 1st. Hatfield, 150 on Mar. 11th. Stanborough area, c.180 on Dec. 28th. Stanstead Abbots G.P., 65 on Jan. 23rd, up to 90 in February, 20 in March and 18 on Oct. 29th. Symondshyde area, c.360 on Jan. 11th, 220 on Mar. 5th, 40 in mid-October, increasing to c.250 on Dec. 1st.
- M Staines Moor, c.40 on Jan. 7th, and 25 on Feb. 23rd. Staines Res., maxima of 55 on Jan. 23rd and Feb. 27th, 44 on Mar. 6th, 15 on Apr. 3rd and 4th, 42 on Nov. 19th, and 25 on Dec. 10th.

166 Grey Plover

- E Chigwell, one on Nov. 19th (CGN). Rainham Marsh, singles on Apr. 24th, Apr. 30th and May 26th; five on Oct. 1st, and singles on Oct. 2nd, 8th, and 11th, Nov. 6th, 12th and 20th, and Dec. 3rd (mo). Wm. Girling Res., one on Nov. 19th (ID).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Nov. 17th (TJD). Staines Res., spring passage lasted from Mar. 19th to June 8th, with a total of 48 bird/days; there were singles in March on 19th, 30th and 31st, and then one or two regularly throughout April, with a maximum of three on Apr. 10th. In May, ten on the 6th was the highest count, with one or two on five other days, followed by a small flurry of records in early June up to 8th, including five on June 5th (mo). The only records at the end of the year (after considerable drying out in the July heatwave) were singles on Oct. 29th (AVM) and Dec. 12th (IGJ).
- S Beddington S.F., two on May 1st (DHH).

As in 1982, Rainham Marsh and Staines Res. were where most Grey Plovers were seen. Apart from the March reports at Staines, all birds followed the usual pattern of occurrence.

169 Lapwing

About 130 pairs were reported in the breeding season, mostly on the outskirts of the Area. The only severe winter weather was a brief cold spell in February, but this seems to have had little effect on this species. Numbers appeared to be high at both ends of the year, and some of the largest flocks are detailed below.

- E Fairlop, 1,000 on Dec. 28th. Fishers Green, 1,000 on Feb. 13th. Rainham Marsh, 1,000 in January and February.
- H Stanborough area, c.2,000 on Dec. 25th. Symondshyde area, 2,500+ on Jan. 11th. West Hyde, 1,400 on Jan. 29th.
- M Near Queen Mary Res., c.1,500 on Jan. 29th, and c.1,600 on Mar. 1st. Staines Res., 1,000+ on Jan. 8th, and c. 1,100 on Mar. 1st.

170 Knot

- E Rainham Marsh, one on Aug. 3rd (NI), two on Sept. 4th, one on Sept. 5th, three on Sept. 8th and one on Sept. 11th (MKD, JMH, NI), two on Sept. 24th (MKD), and one on Nov. 5th (CGN). West Thurrock, one on Sept. 22nd (JMH).
- H Amwell G.P., singles on July 27th and Nov. 13th (GJW).

- M Staines Res., singles on Apr. 4th and 5th (mo), Apr. 21st (RBH, PN), May 11th and 12th (mo), and four on June 5th (GMH). Further singles on June 21st to 24th (mo), July 18th (IGJ, JAS), Sept. 2nd and 3rd (JAH, PN), Oct. 2nd (RJF), Nov. 6th and 10th (GMH).

1982 Additional Record

- M Brent Res., one on Sept. 10th (DAW).

A regular, if rather scarce, passage migrant in the London Area, these 19 records involving some 23 birds are well above the usual number reported each year.

171 Sanderling

- E Rainham Marsh, two on Apr. 19th, three on May 28th (NI) two on Aug. 6th (MKD), then singles on Sept. 6th (TG) and Oct. 8th (MKD).
 H Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 21st (GEDR).
 M Staines Res., up to four (on Apr. 19th) between Apr. 13th and 25th (mo). Reported on 22 days in May from 4th, with numbers varying hour-by-hour on the best days, suggesting large numbers passing through. Highest daily counts were six on May 8th, seven on May 11th (JAH), 13 on May 15th (AVM), nine on May 27th (IGJ), and eight on May 28th (GMH); birds were still present in June with four on June 1st (JAH), and three on June 3rd and 8th (APG, GMH, IGJ). The only record in autumn was of two on Aug. 1st (JAS). Wraysbury Res., three on May 8th (RBH, AVM).
 B Old Slade N.R., three on May 13th (BBC).
 K Dartford Marsh, singles on Aug. 10th (DD) and Oct. 2nd (RD). Keston Ponds, one on Apr. 17th (RD). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 4th (AHH).
 S Barn Elms Res., singles on Apr. 27th (SB *et al.*) and May 22nd (NPS). Holmethorpe S.P., one on Apr. 11th (RWHS).

An obvious movement in mid- and late April, followed by very good numbers at Staines Res. in May resulted in what was probably the best-ever year for this species in the London Area. The May peak is typical. Numbers at coastal sites also reach their peak in this month.

175 Little Stint

There were no spring records. Autumn passage lasted from July 27th to Oct. 15th, with the main influx during the last ten days of September, continuing into early October.

- E Rainham Marsh, up to three between July 27th and Aug. 1st, and then regularly from Sept. 8th (mo), with maxima of 23 on Sept. 25th (NI), and 25 on Oct. 1st (MKD), the last three on Oct. 15th. Wm. Girling Res., one on Sept. 27th (RL).
 H Amwell G.P., one on Oct. 1st (GJW). Rye Meads S.F., one on Oct. 2nd (RMRG).
 M Kempton East Res., two on Sept. 22nd (GAR). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Sept. 23rd (TRD), two on Oct. 5th and 12th (TJD, JAS). Staines Res., one on Aug. 7th, four on Aug. 28th, one on Sept. 10th, and then daily from Sept. 14th to Oct. 1st (mo), with a peak count of 13 on Sept. 20th (GBH, RBH), one on Oct. 5th (IGJ), and seven on Oct. 14th (JAS).
 S Beddington S.F., three on Sept. 26th, two remaining until Sept. 30th (DHH), and two on Oct. 10th (GDJM).

176 Temminck's Stint

E Rainham Marsh, two on May 2nd (TWI).

This is the second earliest spring sighting in London, the earliest being on Apr. 27th 1949 (the second London record). The 46 London records (56 birds) are equally divided between spring and autumn; one record per year is slightly less than has been usual in recent years.

179 Baird's Sandpiper

M Staines Res., the bird first seen on Oct. 14th 1982 remained at this site until Apr. 24th (mo).

Full details of this record were given in *LBR* 47:87-90.

180 Pectoral Sandpiper

E Rainham Marsh, one from Oct. 9th to 15th (MKD).

The eighth to be seen in the last four years, and apart from a December record, the latest in autumn of the 29 London Area records.

182 Curlew Sandpiper

E Rainham Marsh, two on Sept. 15th (JMH), four on Sept. 17th, three on Sept. 19th and 24th (NI, MKD), and four on Sept. 27th (NI).

M Staines Res., singles on May 27th (JAH, IGJ, JAS) and June 17th to 18th (GMH, IGJ, JQ); one on Aug. 31st (IGJ), and then every day between Sept. 18th and 27th (mo), highest counts of four on Sept. 18th (AVM), 19th (MJW), 26th (AVM), and 27th (JE), and also on Oct. 1st (ADL), with singles on Oct. 5th (IGJ) and Oct. 27th (GMH).

1982 Additional Record

M Brent Res., one on Oct. 3rd (DAW).

184 Dunlin

E Highest counts in this sector were as usual along the north shore of the Lower Thames. Monthly maxima for the two most important sites are given.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marsh	600	1,250	500	20	12	10	15	-	-	600	200
West Thurrock	410	430	330	50	-	-	-	-	40	940	1,500

There were no June records, and in fact very few for the period May to September, when numbers must be under-recorded. There were 140 at Grays on Nov. 30th, but elsewhere in the county the highest count was six at Wm. Girling Res. on Sept. 3rd.

H Broxbourne G.P., six on Nov. 13th.

M The drained Staines Res. held birds throughout the year, although in the last three months flocks moved between here and Perry Oaks S.F. as the reservoir was slowly refilled. Peak monthly counts are given for both sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Perry Oaks S.F.	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	53	83	142
Staines Res.	130	130	164	237	43	4	4	21	18	25	100	40

At Staines Res., a large movement took place on Apr. 17th, a day of heavy rain, when numbers increased from c.90 in the morning to 237 by the afternoon. Away from these two sites, there were 16 flying S at Queen Mary Res. on Sept. 4th.

- S Widely reported in small numbers, with a maximum of six at Barn Elms Res. on Mar. 4th.
- K Dartford Marsh, 290 on Jan. 29th, c.100 on Nov. 29th, and 200-250 in December. River Thames at Barking, c.30 on Jan. 11th. River Thames at Crossness, c.70 on Nov. 1st, and c.120 on Dec. 30th. Swanscombe Marsh, 50-60 in the first two months of the year, and 50+ in December.

188 Ruff

- E Fishers Green, one on July 16th and 23rd. King George V Res., one on Apr. 27th and two on Sept. 2nd and 3rd. West Thurrock, two in July and August. Rainham Marsh, monthly maxima are given in the following table.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	-	20	-	1	-	15	30	34	-	4	-

- H Rye Meads S.F., one on Aug. 6th.

- M King George VI Res., 11 on Nov. 19th. Queen Mary Res., two on Dec. 11th. Staines Moor, three on Apr. 16th. Wraysbury Res., four on Feb. 16th. Monthly maxima for Perry Oaks S.F. and Staines Res. are given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Perry Oaks S.F.	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	10	13	11	15+
Staines Res.	12	14	14	8	-	-	5	9	15	7	10	20

- K Dartford Marsh, 15 feeding on a ploughed field on Nov. 22nd and six on a flooded field on Dec. 22nd. Thamesmead, one on Dec. 16th and 30th.
- S Beddington S.F., four flying SE on Mar. 27th, one on Aug. 28th, up to four between Sept. 16th and 26th and one on Oct. 8th.

Usual numbers occurred on passage. In winter birds were back in the Staines area after a decline in 1982 but there were fewer wintering in Essex. It may be that some had crossed the River Thames to Kent, while a liking for farmland could draw birds away into less well-watched areas.

189 Jack Snipe

The minimum number of birds recorded in each month is given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total birds	20	19	10	6	4	12	22	27
Total sites	12	10	10	5	4	9	13	14

There were fewer birds than in 1982. No site held more than three in the early months of the year, when records came from 23 places. The last was one at West Thurrock on Apr. 28th (JMH). First back was one at Rye Meads S.F. on Sept. 11th (RMRG) and by the end of the year this small skulker had been seen at 18 sites. Hogsmill S.F. had the peak for the year with five on both Nov. 19th and Dec. 17th (WRI). No doubt committed observer effort is responsible for larger counts of this wader, if not for the majority of sightings!

190 Snipe

Breeding season records and the largest counts in each county are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, 82 on Feb. 14th. Dagenham, 70 on Feb. 16th.

- Rainham Marsh, 60 on Jan. 8th and 150 on Dec. 19th. Sewardstone, 30 on Mar. 26th. Upminster/Ockendon, 90 on Jan. 8th. West Thurrock, 28 on Mar. 13th and one displaying in May.
- H Broxbourne G.P., 70 on Mar. 27th. Cole Green, 42 on Jan. 16th, one still present on May 9th and two displaying on July 4th. Croxley Moor, one displaying on Mar. 19th. Moor Lane, c.29 on Feb. 16th. London Colney, c.30 on Mar. 29th, display seen in May. Park Street, displaying in May. Panshanger, one displaying on Apr. 4th. Rye House Marsh, 85 on Feb. 5th. Rye Meads S.F., one displaying in May and one in June, a pair probably bred. Sopwell, St. Albans, 48 on Feb. 14th.
- M Harefield Moor G.P., 30 on Dec. 26th. Staines Moor, two pairs on Apr. 16th and two chasing each other on July 3rd. Staines Res., 500+ on Jan. 16th, 472 on Mar. 6th and 180+ on Nov. 4th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 25 on Apr. 3rd.
- K Dartford Marsh, c.105 on one flooded field on Mar. 31st. Sevenoaks G.P., 50 on Oct. 9th. Thamesmead, several displaying on Mar. 31st.
- S Beddington S.F., 60 on Apr. 1st, one on June 30th and 40+ on Nov. 12th. Hogsmill S.F., 30 on Jan. 26th.

There were no finds of nests or young but displays were seen at more sites than in 1982, six of them in Herts. Numbers of migrant and wintering birds appear broadly similar to those in 1982, though comparison is made awkward by lack of knowledge about changes in habitat or observer coverage at many localities. It seems that only a few sites can be relied upon to produce good numbers every year. The counts at Staines Res. eclipse the 350+ there in December 1982 but do not rival the 1,000 to 5,000 seen at Beddington S.F. in the 1960s.

194 Woodcock

All records away from breeding sites are summarized in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sightings	9	2	6	1	1	10	11
Total birds	20	2	6	1	1	10	20

Wintering numbers were quite good at both ends of the year. At Bromley Common, (K), six were seen on Jan. 1st and a shoot put up 12 birds, of which several were shot, on Dec. 30th (GDN). Seven were also flushed in woodland near Hurst Green, (S) on Jan. 1st (PEJ). Observer effort surely subsided in February when only two were seen but there were clearly passage birds in March and arrivals in November. Inner London records were: one found dead on Apr. 16th at 39 Fairfax Place, NW6 (ELR) and one at Warwick Square, SW1 on Nov. 31st (NB).

In the breeding season birds were seen at the following localities (minimum numbers of birds in brackets). None at all were seen in Essex or Kent at this time. The total of 14 sites is about average.

- H Bishop's Wood (1), Broxbourne Woods (5-6), Hatfield Park (2), Northaw Great Wood (2+), Panshanger (1), Symondshyde (1), Wormley Wood (1).
- M Copse Wood, Ruislip (1), Poor's Field, Ruislip (1), Ruislip Local N.R.(1).
- S Ashted Common (1), Headley Heath (2), Walton Heath (3), Wimbledon Common (1).

195 Black-tailed Godwit

- E Rainham Marsh, one on June 18th (MKD) and three on Sept. 11th and 13th (KB,MS).
- M Brent Res., one on May 10th (LB,RW). Perry Oaks S.F., a juvenile from Aug. 9th to 12th (JAS) and one on 17th (TJD). Staines Res., one on Mar. 8th and 9th (JAS *et al.*), one flew NNW on Apr. 17th (RBH,AVM,PN), three on June 27th, five on July 1st and three on July 11th (APG,IGJ,GAR *et al.*), then a juvenile from July 31st to Aug. 22nd, probably visiting Perry Oaks S.F. above, and joined by an adult on Aug. 2nd (PN,RJS,JAS,PAW *et al.*).
- S Beddington S.F., one flew E on Apr. 1st (DJB) and one from Aug. 2nd to 4th (SJA,DHH,GDJM *et al.*).

A return to a more normal spread of records, with some concentration between mid-June and early August. As in 1982, only once did any Black-tailed Godwits meet any Bar-taileds, in spite of the drained basin at Staines Res.

196 Bar-tailed Godwit

- E Rainham Marsh, two on Apr. 16th (Twt).
- H London Colney, one on May 4th (JHT).
- M Staines Res., one on Mar. 13th (RBH,AVM,PN) and six on Mar. 31st (ART), followed by sightings on 31 dates between Apr. 1st and June 9th (mo) with a bird/day total of 51, though no more than three were seen on any one date. At least eight birds passed through in April, six in May and five in June.
- S Barn Elms Res., five flew over on Apr. 25th (rse).

One locality claimed all but three of the records. Once again there was no clear peak to the spring passage but the complete lack of autumn sightings is most unusual.

198 Whimbrel

Spring passage occurred between Apr. 14th and May 19th and began distinctly earlier than in 1982, with five localities receiving birds on Apr. 16th. The total of 24 on Apr. 29th at Staines Res. was the largest count on one day in spring since 28 were seen at Sewardstone on Apr. 25th 1957. The autumn passage lasted from July 14th to Sept. 20th and included a large flock in Kent in early August, at a time that has produced similar movements in earlier years.

- E King George V Res., one on Apr. 16th (CF). Ockendon, four on Apr. 23rd (MJA). Rainham Marsh, two on Apr. 14th (JMH), singles on Apr. 16th, 19th and 21st (NI,Twt), one on May 19th (JMH) and two on Sept. 1st (TG). Walthamstow Res., one on May 7th (DS). West Thurrock, one on July 24th (GCG). Wm. Girling Res., one on Sept. 20th (GB).
- H Barnet College, one flew NW on July 29th (PMD). Broxbourne G.P., one on Apr. 16th (ccl). Rye Meads S.F., one flew SE on Apr. 16th (RMRG). Stocker's Lake, one on May 5th (RRD).
- M Kempton/Hanworth, five flew SE on Apr. 17th (AVM,PN). Staines Res., spring passage lasted from Apr. 16th to May 14th; sightings occurred on 15 dates with a bird/day total of 60, including peaks of six (possibly ten) on Apr. 16th (AVM,PN,BAR) and 24 on Apr. 29th (LB,IGJ,GAR,RW); then singles on July 14th and 23rd, Aug. 7th, and Sept. 2nd and 3rd (PN *et al.*).
- B Queen Mother Res., one flew S on Sept. 3rd (AVM,PN).
- K Chelsfield, 35 flew over calling on Aug. 2nd (BB). Hoblingwell

- Wood, St. Paul's Cray, two flew SW on July 27th (KHP).
 S Barn Elms Res., seven flew over on Apr. 27th (WR).

199 Curlew

All records are summarized in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sightings	-	1	5	9	1	7	10	6	7	7	6	3
Total birds	-	1	4	14	1	7	18	12	9	17	14	9

Typically there was a reasonable spring passage centred on April, with much larger numbers in autumn. It is unusual for July records to outnumber those in August, and October also produced more than average. All the November and December records came from the Lower Thames, principally West Thurrock which had a high-water roost of up to nine birds (MKD, JMH, MS). Other large parties were eight at Rainham Marsh on July 2nd (MKD, PJV), six at West Thurrock on Oct. 8th (MKD), five at Rainham Marsh on Sept. 17th (MKD) and five at Staines Res. on Apr. 17th (BAR). This last locality was better watched than usual, with one basin drained, and attracted about 21 individual Curlews, while Rainham Marsh had at least 18.

201 Spotted Redshank

There was one spring record. Autumn passage lasted from June 17th to Sept. 22nd with a late record on Nov. 20th. 16 birds occurred compared with about 18 in 1982. Oddly the two highest counts for the year fell at either end of the autumn passage, well away from the usual peak period.

- E Netherhall G.P., one on Sept. 3rd (GJW). Rainham Marsh, singles between Sept. 4th and 6th (MKD, TG, JMH) and on Sept. 17th (MKD). West Thurrock, one on Apr. 28th (JMH).
 M Staines Res., two in summer plumage from June 17th to 22nd (GMH, IGJ *et al.*) but four on 21st (PCT, GMH, IGJ, GAR.); then one from Aug. 10th to 21st (mo) and one from Sept. 9th to 22nd (mo).
 K Littlebrook G.P., four with Redshanks on Nov. 20th (PJ). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Sept. 1st (JTr).
 S Holmethorpe S.P., one on Aug. 14th (ESB, RWHS).

202 Redshank

Breeding season records and large counts are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, two or three pairs attempted to breed. Ockendon, G.P., two pairs displaying in June. Rainham Marsh, ten pairs most of which bred, success unknown. West Thurrock, three pairs displaying, may have bred. Outside the breeding season there were 40 at Barking on Oct. 16th and 53 at Grays on Nov. 30th. Monthly maxima at the two main wintering localities were as follows.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marsh	60	100	75	50	-	-	110	60
West Thurrock	375	240	277	129	130	316	700	800

- H Broxbourne G.P., one pair in April did not stay to breed. Near Hatfield, up to six in May and three on June 5th but no evidence of breeding. London Colney, two pairs in May and on June 1st, two birds in July, possibly bred. Outside the breeding season up to seven birds were seen at ten localities.
 M Highway Farm, Harefield, a pair with three young in June. Kempton

East Res., a pair with one young in July. Perry Oaks S.F., at least one bird in May. Shepperton, one pair reared three young. Staines Moor, one pair probably bred. Staines Res., three young in July. West Drayton, one pair on several dates. Monthly maxima at the two most regular sites are given below.

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Perry Oaks S.F.	—	1	2	3	1	—	—	—	—	1	5	7
Staines Res.	20	20	80	54	12	32	23	4	5	3	6	11

Away from all the above sites there were up to eight birds at seven localities.

- B One or two were recorded at four places including Wraysbury G.P. in June and July, but there was no sign of nesting.
- K River Thames at Crossness, 100 estimated on Nov. 8th. Dartford Marsh, 90-100 in January, at least two pairs present in the breeding season. Erith Marsh, c.50 on Jan. 28th, a pair on Apr. 12th. Stone Marsh, a pair on territory on Apr. 9th. Swanscombe Marsh, 40 on Feb. 9th. Thamesmead, several pairs appeared to be breeding.
- S Beddington S.F., two until May 8th, no sign of breeding. West Molesey, a pair with a nest and four eggs on Apr. 29th, among nesting Lapwings. West Molesey G.P., one pair on Apr. 29th. Outside the breeding season there were up to three birds at six localities.

The counts of 800 at West Thurrock on Dec. 21st and 80 at Staines Res. on Mar. 26th both appear to be new maxima at these localities. The only previous London figure rivalling the Thurrock count was 800 along the Purfleet stretch of the River Thames in January 1974. Definite breeding was reported from just six sites; this is a decrease on 1982 but interestingly similar to the number 20 years ago, so the species may be holding its own.

204 Greenshank

Spring passage was recorded at ten localities between Apr. 16th and May 30th. In autumn, the extreme dates were June 20th and Oct. 5th, both at Staines Res. The highest count anywhere was just 14 but it was clearly a normal passage otherwise. Autumn records came from 31 sites altogether, very close to the 30 of 1982. All spring records (except Staines Res. which is summarized) and summaries of autumn records in each county are given.

- E King George V Res., one on May 4th. Rainham Marsh, two on Apr. 16th and one on May 2nd. In autumn there were 14 at Rainham Marsh in early July, 12 at West Thurrock on Sept. 11th and 12 at King George V Res. on Aug. 14th. Walthamstow Res. was the only other site, with up to four birds.
- H Amwell G.P., one on Apr. 23rd. Cole Green, one on May 6th. Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Apr. 29th. Seen at ten localities in autumn, maximum four at Cheshunt G.P. on Aug. 6th.
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Apr. 24th. Staines Res., a good spring passage with about eight birds recorded on 13 dates in April and May, and a maximum of three at one time on Apr. 26th. In autumn recorded at nine sites with maxima of 11 at Staines Res. on Sept. 3rd, five at Brent Res. on Sept. 1st and 6th and five at Kempton East Res. on Aug. 24th. Inner London: Regent's Park, two on Aug. 12th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., singles on Aug. 13th and 31st.
- K Ruxley G.P., one on Aug. 14th. Sevenoaks G.P., maximum three on Aug. 29th.

- S Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 24th. Beddington S.F., two on Apr. 28th. Kingston, one heard on May 10th. In autumn at four sites, maximum seven at Beddington S.F. on Aug. 14th.

208 Green Sandpiper

There were records of up to four at 24 localities early in the year and at 22 localities at the end of the year, with the exception of five at Perry Oaks S.F. on Dec. 21st. These were good numbers of winter sites, though just below the figures (26 at either end of the year) for 1980. In spring reports came from 17 places, with no more than four at one time. Three localities had birds at the start of May; the first back was an early one at Maple Cross S.F. on June 2nd, followed by sightings at two places on June 11th. The species was found at 37 sites in all during the autumn; county maxima for that season are given below.

- E Rainham Marsh, 40 on Aug. 13th, close to the 1982 peak of 41. This remains much the best site in London for autumn Green Sandpipers. West Thurrock, 16 on Aug. 3rd.
 H Cole Green, 15 on Aug. 24th. Stanstead Abbots G.P., ten on Aug. 8th.
 M Kempton East Res., five on Aug. 13th. Perry Oaks S.F., eight on Aug. 12th and a later peak of seven on Oct. 4th and 5th.
 B Wraysbury G.P., one on Sept. 10th.
 K Sevenoaks G.P., 13 on July 5th and 11 on Aug. 3rd.
 S Beddington S.F., 12 on Aug. 8th. Holmethorpe S.P., seven on July 31st.

Herts. and Kent shared just over half the wintering sites. While other counties may be limited by lack of habitat, there must be a suspicion that Essex has suitable areas that are under-watched.

209 Wood Sandpiper

The species was reported from just six sites, an average number. There were two individuals in spring and only Rainham Marsh had more than two at a time in autumn. One on June 28th was the earliest autumn bird for six years.

- E Rainham Marsh, singles on July 11th and 21st (JMH,NI); then regularly present between Aug. 6th and Sept. 5th with maxima of four on Aug. 20th and five on 21st (MKD,NI *et al.*); finally two on Sept. 19th (NI).
 H Hampermill Lake, one on June 28th (MG). London Colney, one on May 31st (JHT).
 M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Sept. 12th (TJD). Staines Res., one on July 30th and 31st (RJS,JAS *et al.*), then regularly present from Aug. 21st to Sept. 3rd with a maximum of two on 21st, 25th and 27th (RBH,PN *et al.*).
 S Beddington S.F., one on May 4th (LJP), then singles on July 26th and Aug. 2nd with two on Aug. 4th (MJC,NHM,MJN).

211 Common Sandpiper

One or two wintering birds were present at just four sites early in the year but at eight sites at the year's end. Spring passage lasted from Apr. 3rd until May 25th, reaching a height in the first week of May. No locality had more than four. The earliest June records were of singles along the River Thames by Syon Park on the 18th and 24th, an

area that may be suitable for breeding. Autumn passage clearly began by June 28th and lasted well into November. Peak counts were unexceptional and concentrated as usual into the period between late July and early August. Highest counts in autumn and Inner London records are given.

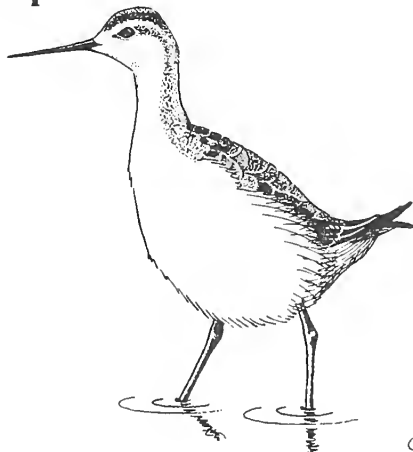
- E Lea Valley Reservoirs, 55 on Aug. 6th. Rainham Marsh, 65 on Aug. 3rd. Wm. Girling Res., 18 on Aug. 4th.
- H Rye Meads S.F., 12 on Aug. 7th. Stanstead Abbots G.P., eight on July 25th.
- M Brent Res., ten on Aug. 23rd. Perry Oaks S.F., 19 on July 24th and Aug. 6th. Queen Mary G.P./Res., 12 on July 20th. Staines Res., c.20 on Aug. 11th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on Apr. 25th. Regent's Park, recorded on Aug. 30th and Sept. 19th.
- K River Thames at Crossness, eight on Aug. 1st.
- S Barn Elms Res., seven on Aug. 23rd and 26th. Beddington S.F., 16+ on Aug. 9th. Holmethorpe S.P., five on Aug. 14th. Inner London: River Thames at South Bank, by Bankside Power Station, two on Apr. 27th.

213 Turnstone

Spring passage was recorded at only three sites, all of which received their first birds between Apr. 19th and 22nd. In autumn records came from five places, followed by a series of sightings in November and December all along the Lower Thames. There can be little doubt that the River Thames in East London is not so well-watched as some of the gravel pits and reservoirs, and must attract many estuarine waders that pass through unseen.

- E Grays, singles on Nov. 16th and 30th (JMH). Rainham Marsh, singles on Apr. 19th, May 28th and 30th (NI). West Thurrock, four on Aug. 27th (RBH,AVM) and five on Dec. 18th (MS).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Oct. 20th (BS).
- M Staines Res., recorded on nine dates between Apr. 22nd and May 6th with peaks of four on Apr. 23rd (GMH), five on 25th (RB,TJD) and four on May 4th (mo), and a bird/day total of 26; then one on May 10th (AVM,PN), two on 16th (IGJ) and one on 22nd (TRD,ADL); finally one on July 28th and 31st (AVM,PN).
- K Crossness, one on Aug. 15th (PE). Dartford Marsh, one on Aug. 10th (DD) and five on Nov. 6th (RD). Swanscombe, one on Nov. 27th (BMU).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 22nd (RBH).

214 Wilson's Phalarope



G.M. HAIG

- M Staines Res., one moulting from juvenile into first-winter plumage stayed from Sept. 14th to 26th (AVM *et al.*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the first record for the London Area of this attractive Nearctic wader. The largest of the phalaropes, its appearance at some time had been expected following a number of other inland records in S.E. England in recent years. Its age made it clear that it had only recently crossed the Atlantic, following 12 days of westerly winds. The 13-day stay enabled many to see it, albeit often at too long range to test out its customary tameness.

215 Red-necked Phalarope

- M Staines Res., a female in breeding plumage found in the afternoon of June 3rd, left early in the morning of the 4th (FRC,GMH *et al.*).

This is the ninth record for the London Area and the first at this site. There have now been two in June, three in August, two in September and two in October.

218 Arctic Skua

- E Barking, one on Sept. 4th and 6th (MKD,PJS). Rainham Marsh, one on Aug. 31st (MKD). Tilbury, one on Sept. 1st (JMH). West Thurrock, one on Sept. 11th (MS).
M Queen Mary Res., one flew SE on Sept. 3rd (RBH,AVM,PN *et al.*) and two flew S on Sept. 11th (AVM,PN).

A good showing and all on typical dates.

218/221 Skua *sp.*

- K River Thames between Barking and Woolwich, singles on Sept. 6th and Sept. 19th (PJS).

222 Mediterranean Gull

- E Rainham Marsh, an adult on Mar. 5th (MKD).
H Rye Meads S.F., a first-winter bird on Nov. 27th (MAH).
M Kenton Recreation Ground, an adult on Dec. 31st (PAW). Longford, a first-winter bird on Jan. 6th (APG). Staines Res., a first-winter bird on Mar. 22nd (GMH), and adults on Oct. 17th (GMH), Nov. 20th (TJL) and Dec. 29th (RJS).
S Belmont, a second-winter bird on Dec. 13th (PJS).

Nine birds in one year exceeds the previous best of eight in 1979. But this is compatible with the increase of this species generally throughout the whole of southern Britain in recent years.

225 Little Gull

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	1	3	4	0	3	19	135	12	1	1

The total of 179 bird/days (tabulated above) was noticeably boosted by the presence of several long-staying groups of birds in September. A minimum of 68 birds was seen and of those aged 86% were immatures; southwest London again claimed the lion's share of sightings (85%).

As in 1982 spring passage was almost negligible, only singles were involved and these are given: Holwell Hyde, on Mar. 15th (PW);

Barn Elms Res., on Apr. 11th (JPPW); Staines Res., on Apr. 20th, 26th and from May 5th to 8th (mo).

There were no mid-summer sightings and the autumn passage extended from July 20th to Nov. 8th. One was at Staines Res. on July 20th (GAR) and two were at West Thurrock from July 28th to Aug. 3rd (MKD); there were no further sightings until Aug. 10th, and from then until Aug. 26th there were records of one or two at nine localities. However there was no real evidence of passage until Sept. 7th when seven appeared at Walton Res. and stayed until Sept. 12th (ML). Five were at Kempton East Res. on Sept. 11th (JO); and at Staines Res. totals rose to seven on Sept. 15th (TJD) and to 11 by Sept. 16th (MJW *et al.*) slowly declining thereafter until only one remained on Sept. 23rd. Only six records were noted in October, and all were sightings of singles except for six at Staines Res. on Oct. 6th (ADL). There was only one November record — on 6th at Staines Res. (GMH) and only one December record — on 12th at Barn Elms Res. (BPA).

227 Bonaparte's Gull

S Barn Elms Res., a first-winter bird on Jan. 29th (NPS).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the first record for the London Area. Although familiar right across its native North America this represents the first sighting of this species away from the coast anywhere in the British Isles. Whilst it is surprising that this species should have put in an appearance in London, it is even more so considering it normally winters along the coast.

Table 2. Provisional results from principal localities of the January 1983 Gull Roost Census.

Reservoir	Black-headed Gull	Common Gull	Lesser black-backed Gull	Herring Gull	Great black-backed Gull	Total
King George V	20,000	100	1,000	2,000	50	23,150
Wm. Girling	35,000	12,000	2,000	3,000	200	52,200
Hilfield Park	25,037	2,753	106	28	90	28,014
Staines/King George VI	1,369	18	54	1,664	86	3,191
Queen Mary	31,251	4,564	5,330	1,763	23	42,931
Wraysbury	601	62	21	0	28	712
Queen Mother	38,157	4,240	3,741	3,691	50	49,879
Queen Eliz. II	79,077	911	1,822	2,280	188	84,278
Barn Elms	6,500	8	32	3	3	6,546
	236,992	24,656	14,106	14,429	728	290,901
comparison with January 1969 count	-17.6%	-42.1%	+15.4%	-69.8%	-76.9%	-26.5%

The above table includes results of the January 1983 Gull Roost Census, this was planned for the weekend of Jan. 22nd to 23rd. Unfortunately, however, this date coincided with the water-workers strike which prevented access to several reservoirs on the agreed date; consequently not all the counts were co-ordinated. The overall totals appear to be well down on the last census in January 1969, in fact 26% below the totals of that year; it remains unclear whether this represents a real decrease.

228 Black-headed Gull

All counts of over 2,000, two ringing recoveries and some Inner

London observations are given. The total during the Census (see Table 2) in January was 236,992, and this is 17.6% below the 1969 totals.

- E Chingford, two birds picked up in January and September had been ringed in Poland (May 1983) and Regent's Park (November 1982) respectively. King George V Res., a bird picked up in November 1982 had been ringed in Prague, Czechoslovakia in March 1982; 20,000 were counted in January. Rainham Marsh 4,000 on Jan. 22nd rose to 10,000 on Feb. 19th and 4,000 were still present on Mar. 1st; 3,000 were again present in November and December. Wm. Girling Res., 35,000 in January.
- H Hilfield Park Res., 25,037 on Jan. 23rd and 2,500+ on Aug. 30th.
- M Queen Mary Res., 31,251 in January. Staines Res., 2,200 on June 30th, 5,000+ on Sept. 6th and 9,000+ on Oct. 6th. Wraysbury Res., 4,500 on Dec. 23rd. Inner London: River Thames at Westminster, between 200 and 300 were present from January to February and from November to December, the peak count of 400 on Mar. 1st (PJS) was slightly later than in previous years.
- B Queen Mother Res., 38,157 in January and 6,200 on Dec. 23rd.
- S Barn Elms Res., 6,500 on Jan. 23rd and c.27,000 on Nov. 23rd. Holmethorpe S.P., between 2,000 and 3,000 in January and February. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 79,077 in January.

232 Ring-billed Gull

1979 Additional Record

- E Rainham Marsh, a first-winter bird on Feb. 25th (RBH).

1982 Additional Record

- M Staines Res., a second-winter bird on Nov. 28th (GMH).

Both records have been accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee: these two late acceptances represent the first records for the London Area. Nevertheless it is perhaps not too surprising that this Nearctic gull has found its way into our area, and greater diligence from observers may well prove it to be more regular.

233 Common Gull

Selected winter counts, a ringing recovery and some observations of the spring passage are given. The total for this species during the Census (see Table 2) was 24,656, a fall of 42.1% on the 1969 totals; this could well indicate a real decline of this species in London.

- E Rainham Marsh, 1,000 on Feb. 19th. Wm. Girling Res., 12,000 in January.
- H Hilfield Park Res., 2,753 on Jan. 23rd, 3,000+ on Mar. 11th.
- M Kempton East Res., passage was noted throughout March and peaked on Mar. 20th with a count of 202. Queen Mary Res., a bird found dead in February had been ringed as a nestling in Estonia (USSR) in June 1972; 4,564 were counted in January. Stoke Newington Res., peak counts were noted of 222 on Feb. 26th and 140 on Oct. 30th. Wraysbury Res., 500 on Dec. 23rd.
- B Queen Mother Res., 4,240 in January and 600 on Dec. 23rd.
- S Barn Elms Res., peak passage was noted on Apr. 9th when 105 were seen. Queen Elizabeth Res., 911 in January. Inner London: River Thames at Westminster, passage peaked in late March and early April.

234 Lesser Black-backed Gull

As in 1982 only scant information of an autumn passage was received, and there were few sightings of darker-mantled birds. Selected counts, a ringing recovery and details of an unsuccessful breeding attempt are given. The total for this species during the Census in January was 14,106 (see Table 2), an increase of 15% over the 1969 totals. This was the only species to have increased since the last census.

- E King George V Res., 1,000 in January; a bird picked up dead in July had been ringed at Farnham, Surrey in November 1976. Wm. Girling Res., 2,000 in January.
- H Hilfield Park Res., 600+ on Aug. 30th.
- M Queen Mary Res., 5,330 in January; a bird picked up dead in September had been ringed as a nestling in the Netherlands in July 1979. Staines Res., 520 on June 30th, and c.1,000 on July 28th. Wraysbury Res., c.500 on July 31st. Inner London: London Zoo, one pair nested and one egg was laid, but the female died on the nest.
- B Queen Mother Res., 3,741 in January.
- S Queen Elizabeth II Res., 1, 822 in January.

235 Herring Gull

Selected counts, breeding records and sightings of yellow-legged birds are given. The total during the Census in January was 14,429 (see Table 2) and this represents a decrease of 69.8%. It is difficult to believe that this species could have declined so dramatically in 14 years and further counts would be necessary to confirm this. Nine pairs attempted to nest, and at least eight young were reared; this is the best year to date but could merely reflect the increasing diligence of observers.

- E King George V Res., 2,000 in January. Wm. Girling Res., 3,000 in January.
- M Queen Mary Res., 1,763 in January. Wraysbury Res., 2,250+ on Dec. 23rd.
- B Queen Mother Res., 3,691 in January, 1,500+ on Dec. 23rd.
- S Queen Elizabeth II Res., 2,280 in January.

Breeding records were noted as follows (all were in Inner London): Charing Cross, Embankment, one or two present during the summer, possibly bred. County Hall, one pair reared one young. Hyde Park, one pair reared three young on Serpentine Island. London Zoo, one pair bred. Lord's Cricket Ground, one sitting on May 30th at the previous year's site. Westminster, two pairs present, one pair reared two young. Whitehall, one pair reared two young, although three occupied nests (and possibly a fourth) were noted in early May.

Yellow-legged birds were noted at the following localities (all involved singles except at Staines Res. and Barn Elms Res.): Barn Elms Res. (two during December), Epsom Downs, Harefield Moor G.P., Littlebrook G.P., Rainham Marsh, Staines Res. (up to eight seen on several dates), St. James's Park, one throughout the year. River Thames at Crossness, Kew and Westminster. Birds at Rainham (MKD) and at Staines Res. (ADL) showed characters of *L.a. michahellis*. Most records fell between late June and November, which would seem to be consistent with a southern origin.

236 Iceland Gull

- M Staines Res., a first-year bird on Apr. 22nd (RBH, JAH, PN *et al.*). Wraysbury Res., a first-winter bird in the gull roost on Dec. 23rd (JMP).

Only the second and third records during the last 15 years, but in the context of increasing sightings in southern Britain at both ends of the year, these two records are not so surprising.

238 Great Black-backed Gull

All counts over 100 are given. The total during the Census was a paltry 728 (see Table 2), a fall of 76.9% on the January 1969 totals. This was the largest decrease of any gull species since the last organized counts, but to some extent the poor totals of the last few years have suggested that the wintering population of this species is falling within London.

- E Wm. Girling Res., 200 in January.
 M Wraysbury Res., 650+ on Dec. 23rd.
 B Queen Mother Res., 150+ on Dec. 23rd.
 S Holmethorpe S.P., 150 in January. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 188 in January. Walton Res., c.100 on Nov. 12th.

240 Kittiwake

Another above-average set of records with 30 sightings of 39 birds, six of which were found dead. 34% of all sightings fell between Feb. 6th and 20th, a time of cold northeasterly gales which 'wrecked' many other seabirds. All records are given and all are adults unless specified otherwise.

- E Rainham, one on Mar. 26th (MKD). Walthamstow Res., an immature on Aug. 13th (JF). West Thurrock, an immature on Mar. 12th (PJV). Wm. Girling Res., one on Jan. 23rd (dead) and another on Aug. 6th (JF) were both immatures (the latter bird was the same bird seen on Walthamstow Res.). Woolwich Ferry, one on the north side of the river on Feb. 19th (RBH, AVM).
- M Gillespie Road Park, an immature on Sept. 4th, was seen later the same day at Stoke Newington Res. (TG). King George VI Res., one flew W on Jan. 16th (AVM, PN). Queen Mary Res. an oiled bird on Feb. 9th, six on Feb. 15th (one immature), two of which were found dead as were further singles on Feb. 26th and Apr. 16th (HRG, AVM, GAR); immatures on Aug. 14th (AVM, PN) and another found dead on Sept. 8th (GAR). Staines Res., one flew N on Feb. 6th and two flew W on May 9th (GAR, BAR); an immature on Aug. 5th and an adult on Sept. 2nd (GMH). Wraysbury Res., one on Feb. 9th (AVM). Inner London: River Thames at Westminster, one flew downstream on Jan. 14th, and an immature on June 6th (PJS).
- B Queen Mother Res., three on Feb. 12th, and one on Feb. 19th (GMH, AVM).
- K Orpington, one on Jan. 19th (RD). River Thames at Dartford Marsh, singles on July 17th and Aug. 10th (RD, DD). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 4th (AHH).
- S Barn Elms Res., two flew E on Feb. 20th and one W on May 15th (both unaged) (NPS). Kew Gardens, an oiled adult on Feb. 17th (RBH). River Thames at Kingston, an immature on Feb. 16th (CRAC). Queen Elizabeth II Res., one on Feb. 14th (WRI).

245 Sandwich Tern

- E Rainham, one on Apr. 30th, and another on Sept. 5th (MKD).
 H Hilfield Park Res., one on Sept. 4th (CIB).
 M King George VI Res., two flew SE on Sept. 18th (PN). Queen Mary Res., three flew SE on Aug. 20th and two from Sept. 18th to 22nd (PCT, RBH, AVM). Staines Res., one on Apr. 25th (APG, GMH), two flew SE on June 11th (PN, BAR), and five (in groups of two and three) on Sept. 27th (JE).
 K River Thames at Woolwich, one on Aug. 23rd, and three on Sept. 29th (PJS). Sevenoaks G.P., two on June 8th (AHH).
 S Barn Elms Res., two flew W on Sept. 30th (NPS). River Thames at Kew, two on Sept. 27th (RBH). Inner London: River Thames near Blackfriars Bridge, two on Sept. 23rd (JDW).

247 Common Tern

Breeding records are given. Passage records are summarized under 247/8. In 1983 there were at least 60 nesting pairs and they successfully reared a minimum of 104 young. The best year yet both in terms of the number of pairs and also the number of young raised.

- E Walthamstow Res., three pairs nested on the drained reservoir, one pair reared two young.
 H Rye Meads S.F., 42 pairs reared 77 young.
 M Brent Res., three pairs reared seven young on three nesting rafts. King George VI Res., five pairs nested 'many young later' (PN). Queen Mary Res., one pair bred nearby. Staines Res., two pairs nested on the drained north basin and each reared two young.
 B Old Slade N.R., two pairs nested, however both nests were destroyed by excavations for the nearby M25 motorway construction. Wraysbury G.P., seven pairs nested, and six pairs reared 14 young.

247/8 Common/Arctic Tern

Passage records of Common Terns are summarized here together with unspecified observations of Common/Arctic Terns.

As in 1982 another poor spring passage; the first bird appeared at Rye Meads S.F. on Apr. 9th. The few counts of passage birds in double figures began with c.20 at Staines Res. on Apr. 19th and also ten the following day when c.25 flew E over Headley Heath. At West Thurrock 35 on Apr. 26th had risen to 50 two days later and 12 were at Staines Res. on Apr. 30th rising to 20+ on May 4th.

Autumn passage was virtually negligible away from the River Thames, in fact only four counts in double figures were made away from the river and these are given. In late July West Thurrock held 113 birds on 28th and 50 on 30th which had risen to 140 by Aug. 3rd; on the opposite side of the river c.156 were at Dartford Marsh on Aug. 10th. 16 were at Queen Mary Res. on Aug. 20th and 175 at West Thurrock on Aug. 23rd which rose to 210 by Aug. 25th; two days later 103 drifted E at Northfleet and 75 were at Queen Mary Res. By Aug. 31st totals at West Thurrock had declined to 75. 52 were at King George V Res. on Sept. 3rd and Barking held 60 on Sept. 4th; a good total of between 150 and 200 at Woolwich Ferry on Sept. 5th fell to 35 on 6th and 30 on 8th. Back at West Thurrock 120 were seen on Sept. 11th and Woolwich Ferry saw 150 on Sept. 16th and 30 on 21st; 23 flew S at Troy Mill G.P. on Sept. 23rd and the last

count of note was of 40 at West Thurrock on Oct. 8th. The last birds of the year were at Fishers Green and Nazeing G.P. on Oct. 22nd. Inner London: Hyde Park, one on Oct. 1st. Kensington Gardens, two on Aug. 3rd (DAB). Regent's Park, three on May 29th (TDr). River Thames at Blackfriars Bridge, about six on Sept. 23rd (JDW). River Thames at Westminster, three on Sept. 8th (PB,PJS), two on Sept. 20th (PJS) and five or six on Sept. 23rd (NDH).

248 Arctic Tern

The quietest spring passage for many years; however during the last three years this species has become increasingly evident in autumn. All records are given.

- E King George V Res., 20 on Apr. 22nd (JF). Rainham, one on Aug. 31st (MKD). Tilbury, two on Sept. 1st (JMH). West Thurrock, one on July 28th and 30th, four on Aug. 3rd, five on Aug. 23rd, two on 25th and 31st and lastly one on Sept. 8th (MKD,JMH).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Aug. 14th (GJW). Hilfield Park Res., four on May 4th and singles on Apr. 25th, May 8th, Sept. 11th and Oct. 5th (CIB,PAW).
- M Harefield Moor G.P., two on Apr. 24th (PAW). Staines Res., two on Apr. 17th, one on Apr. 18th and six on Apr. 19th, and then two on Apr. 23rd and 24th with further singles on Apr. 30th and May 3rd (mo), 30+ on May 4th (RJS). In autumn singles on Sept. 3rd, Sept. 18th, two on Sept. 19th and one on Sept. 20th (mo).
- S Barn Elms Res., three on Sept. 11th and Sept. 24th all flew W (RBH,NPS). Walton Res., one from Sept. 10th to 11th. (S. Spooner *per* SDBWS).

251 Little Tern

A typical year, all records are given.

- E Tilbury, three on Sept. 1st (JMH).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., singles on June 21st and on July 8th (HPM).
- M Staines Res., one on Apr. 17th, two flew SE on Apr. 27th and three flew SE on Apr. 30th (AVM,PN,BAR), one on May 6th (PAW), and one on June 5th and 6th (TJD,AVM,JAS).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on July 9th (AHH). River Thames at Woolwich Arsenal, two on Sept. 29th (PJS).
- S Walton Res., one from Sept. 8th to 10th (ML).

253 Black Tern

An average year with sightings from 20 localities totalling approximately 298 birds. Spring passage began on Apr. 16th and extended until May 28th; the first sighting was of three at Hilfield Park Res. on Apr. 16th (CIB). However apart from four at Staines Res. on Apr. 17th, two on Apr. 30th and May 4th and a notable flock of 25 at the same site on May 6th (mo), all sightings were of single birds. The total for the spring was 49 birds at six localities.

There were two mid-summer sightings, both on June 25th when seven were at Queen Mary Res. and a single at Staines Res. (HRG, mo). Autumn passage extended from July 28th until Oct. 18th and 17 localities had approximately 241 birds. The majority of the passage was confined to West Thurrock, indeed there was only one count that exceeded six away from this site. At this locality 38 were present on July 28th and 25 on Aug. 3rd (MKD,JMH), but there were few other

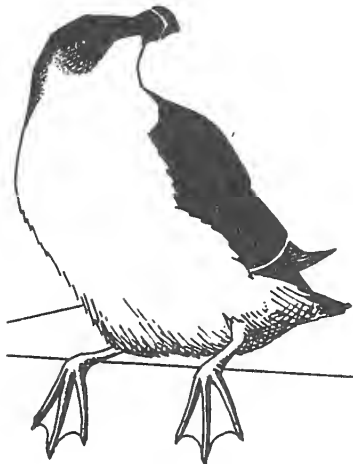
significant counts until Aug. 20th when 13 were at Harefield Moor G.P. (PN) and on Aug. 23rd when totals at West Thurrock rose to 50 and increased to 60 two days later (MKD). There was some evidence of a small movement across the Area around this time, and six localities were involved. Numbers at West Thurrock peaked again with 12 on Aug. 31st and 25 on Sept. 10th falling to 20 the following day (MKD,GCG,MS). The last bird of the year was at Hilfield Park Res., as indeed the first had been, from Oct. 18th to 20th (SHM).

255 Guillemot

- E River Thames at Rainham, one on Mar. 10th (JMH). River Thames at the Thames Barrier, one picked up on Feb. 16th was emaciated but following feeding was released a few days later downriver (NB). Theydon Bois, one picked up dead on Oct. 25th (EFCC).
- M Staines Res., one on Mar. 9th (GMH,AVM,CWM,JAS).
- B Queen Mother Res., one on Feb. 19th was of the 'bridled' variety (GMH,PN).
- S River Thames at Barn Elms Res., one first seen on Feb. 19th was joined by another the following day, and these two birds were seen, either singly or together, as far upriver as Kew Bridge and as far downriver as Hammersmith Bridge. The last sighting was on Mar. 17th; the birds moved a considerable distance each day with the tidal flow (RBH,NPS *et al.*). Teddington Lock, one from Feb. 21st to 24th was in summer plumage (and thus different from the two birds further downriver) (JH,RH).

Eight birds in one year is without precedent. However all but one of the records fell between Feb. 16th and Mar. 10th, a period when large numbers of auks were 'wrecked' off the east coast of England. It is possible that some duplication of sightings occurred. (See photograph on p. 62).

257 Razorbill



- M Hounslow, one handed into the RSPCA on Feb. 8th (*per* RSPCA) featured in the Greenford and Northolt 'Leader'. Wraysbury Res., one on Feb. 6th (AVM). Inner London: River Thames at Wapping, one apprehended by the River Police on Feb. 9th was emaciated and died the following day (NB).

The first records since 1978, and these take the London total to 22. Interestingly all sightings fell before any Guillemot records.

260 Little Auk

- E King George V Res., one on Oct. 29th (JF).
 M Park Wood, Ruislip, one on Feb. 12th was found in a puddle, it died several hours later (AS,RJSS). Wraysbury Res., one on Feb. 9th was diving vigorously before it flew off strongly NW (AVM).

These three take the London total to 24 and they comprise the first records since 1977. In addition single birds picked up and handed into the RSPCA during the second week of February in Putney and South Mimms were reported to be of this species. However the Committee felt that due to the rather circumstantial evidence of these records, and the lack of corroboration by a competent observer, they should be published but not included in the totals.

261 Puffin

- H Shenley, a first-winter bird was found on a doorstep on Feb. 12th, it was ringed on Feb. 15th and released at Snettisham, Norfolk, on Feb. 19th (BT).
 M Inner London: Stonecutter Street, EC4, an immature found under a truck on Feb. 10th was very emaciated and died three days later (NB).
 K River Thames at Swanscombe Marsh, two adults flew upriver on Feb. 9th (BMU).

These three records are the most in any year since 1967 and also, as with Razorbill, all sightings occurred before any of the Guillemot records.

264 Stock Dove

During the breeding season over 100 pairs were recorded at 40 localities, an increase over 1982. The species is well distributed in suitable habitat throughout the London Area, with some sizeable concentrations in some well-wooded parks (20+ pairs in both Osterley and Richmond Parks for example). Breeding season localities and all three-figure counts are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, Epping Forest, Dagnam Park, Hainault, Havering, Romford, Purfleet, Rainham Marsh.
 H Bushey, Cassiobury Park, Hilfield Park Res., Hampermill Lake, Serge Hill, Stocker's Lake, Whippendell Woods, Wormley Wood, Panshanger, 125 on Jan. 16th.
 M Hampstead Heath, Woodside Park, Osterley Park. Harefield Moor G.P., 231 on Jan. 21st and 140 on Dec. 18th. Osterley Park, 131 on Apr. 8th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, two pairs. Regent's Park, one pair.
 K Bromley Common, Dartford Marsh, Sundridge Park at Bromley, Foots Cray, Sevenoaks G.P., Ruxley G.P., Thamesmead, Woolwich.
 S Barn Elms Res., Banstead Wood, Beddington S.F., Devilsden Wood, Headley Heath, Pain's Hill Park at Cobham, Richmond Park, Wimbledon Common, Woodmansterne. Oxshott 200+ on Apr. 1st.

265 Woodpigeon

Due to the relatively mild weather at both ends of the year, few large flocks were recorded. Flocks numbering up to 600 were reported from several localities in the first part of the winter, and there was some evidence of passage in late October. By far the largest flocks

were 1,150 at South Ockendon (E) on Dec. 10th and 1,500 at Shenleybury (H) on Dec. 18th. Inner London: Bred in St. James's Park, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

266 Collared Dove

The few comments on changes of status, indicated a slow increase in most areas, but a decline was apparent in the Coulsdon area (S). However if the number of three-figure flocks is taken into consideration, the species appears to be quite common in some suburban areas.

All counts of three-figures or above were: Grove Farm (H), 130+ on Nov. 4th. Maple Cross S.F., 120 on Dec. 30th. St. Albans, c.250 on Jan. 8th. Tyttenhanger, 100-150 in June and July. Sears Park, Cheam, 180 in January and 149 in December. Woodmansterne, 160 on Sept. 26th. Inner London: Regent's Park, one pair possibly bred.

267 Turtle Dove

Following the first sighting at Stanstead Abbots on Apr. 21st, most areas reported their first birds by the end of the month. There was an influx in the first week of May, particularly in the Lea Valley, where a 'heavy passage' was observed at Nazeing on May 1st, and 20 were seen at Rye Meads S.F. on the same date. Good numbers were reported during the breeding season, with increases noted at Joyden's Wood, Bexley, and Hainault. Inner London: Regent's Park, seen on three dates in the spring. Passage birds were seen well into September in a number of localities, the last bird of the year was seen on Oct. 8th at Staines Res.

269 Ring-necked Parakeet

Found in at least 30 localities during the year, a similar number to last year. However in contrast to the previous year very few were found north of the River Thames, and none at all in Essex, and it must be assumed that the breeding colonies of the early 1970s no longer exist in this area. All records are given, but those at principal localities are summarized.

H Rye Meads S.F., two on Oct. 30th (RMRG).

M Chiswick House, up to six all year (RBH,DKJW). Little Britain Lake, two during November and December (PAW,IGJ). Hampstead Heath, one in August (KES). Staines Res., one on Oct. 30th (AVM). Syon Park, one on Aug. 23rd (RBH). Osterley Park, one pair bred (DGH). Queen Mary G.P., four on Feb. 19th and Aug. 20th, rather fewer than in 1982 (HRG). Kenton, one on May 29th (PAW). Shepperton G.P., five on Aug. 4th (HWE).

B Wraysbury G.P., singles in January and again on Oct. 30th (RRD,AJ), two on Nov. 20th (AVM,PN), 51 in early December (D. Perry *per* FRC), one on Dec. 17th and four on Dec. 18th (DBY, AVM,PN).

K Beckenham area, up to 21 flying to roost during year (JDH). Bromley, 16 from July to December (WTGB,PDG). Kesley Park, Beckenham, three on Jan. 28th and eight on Dec. 22nd (GDn). Beckenham Place Park, up to three all year (DD). Bexley, one or two all year (SJG). Foots Cray Meadows, one or two all year (SJG). Greenwich Park, one or two all year (DRC *et al.*). Hither Green Cemetery, between 40 and 60 from January to March; up to 50 from October to December (DD) and 54 on Dec. 24th (BB). Petts Wood, two pairs at nest holes (KHP). Park Langley, up to five during the

year, including one pair at a nest hole in April (KP, WFW). Sundridge Park, present in breeding season (WTGB).

- S Kew Gardens, up to six during the year (RBH). Barn Elms Res., one pair on Apr. 17th (RBH). Sears Park, Cheam, one on Mar. 9th (SWG). Hogsmill S.F., one on Dec. 3rd (WRI). Hersham S.F., singles on Jan. 16th and Dec. 3rd (SDBWS). Headley Heath, 12 on Nov. 19th (RRG). Fetcham, singles on Aug. 23rd, Oct. 3rd and 27th (CC, DSC). Fetcham Park, singles from Apr. 21st to May 3rd (RAF). Walton-on-Thames, up to eight all year (JRM).

271 Cuckoo

A bird seen in flight over Beddington S.F., on Mar. 27th (GDJM) was the earliest record of the year, preceeding the first main influx by nearly three weeks. Birds were rather slow in arriving, and it was not until the last week of April that most areas had their first birds. Found in nearly 60 localities during the breeding season, an increase on recent years, with concentrations of over five calling males reported from Hainault, North Weald, and the Colne Valley during May and June (MKD, HB). It was noted as being much commoner than in 1982 at Wraysbury G.P. (RRG), while at Rye Meads S.F. 11 occupied Reed Warbler nests were found (RMRG). Other victimised nests were reported from Sewardstone (Dunnock), and Stocker's Lake (Reed Warbler) (CF, RRD). Juveniles were widespread in August, but September records came from just two sites, the last being at Tyttenhanger on the 25th (PDW).

Inner London: one in Regent's Park on May 3rd (TRDt).

274 Barn Owl

Only nine records were received including at least one pair, which bred successfully. Although it was found in all counties except Middlesex in the year under review, this meagre total is in sad contrast to the position in 1973, when it was found in over 20 localities, including at least four pairs. All records are given.

- E Tilbury, one pair reared six young (*per* CWP). Ockendon, one on Apr. 13th (MJA). Sewardstone, one on Nov. 26th (DS). Havering, one on Dec. 28th (*per* MKD).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one on Dec. 17th (RL).
- B Wraysbury, M25 roundabout, one on Jan. 19th (SD).
- K Littlebrook and Dartford Marsh area, one seen on many dates, probably the pair seen in previous years (DRG).
- S Chessington Zoo area, one on Dec. 14th (PWM). Surbiton, one heard on June 25th (CRAC).

279 Little Owl

Found in well over 60 localities during the year, a slight increase on last year, and reflecting a healthy population away from heavily built-up areas. At least 32 pairs were reported in the breeding season, of which 17 successfully reared young, the majority being in Essex and Herts. There were again no Inner London records. Details of pairs in the breeding season are given in the table below:

Essex	Herts.	Middx.	Bucks.	Kent	Surrey
14	8	1	0	4	5

280 Tawny Owl

At least 42 pairs were present during the breeding season in at least 50 localities, a similar position to last year. Found in a further 50 localities during the rest of the year with some birds occupying quite isolated roosts in built-up areas. Highest numbers appear to be in Surrey, Herts., and Middlesex, while at the other end of the scale it is rather under-recorded in Essex and Inner London. Breeding season summaries in addition to Inner London records are given below.

- E Recorded in seven localities in the breeding season, with at least six pairs present.
- H Found in 13 localities, with five pairs recorded.
- M 15 breeding pairs in 12 localities. Maximum seven pairs at Osterley Park (DGH). Inner London: no breeding this year, singles only in Kensington Gardens on three dates in March, three dates in April and one date in August. Hyde Park, one on Aug. 3rd (DAB).
- B None recorded.
- K Found in 11 localities, at least ten breeding pairs.
- S Found in 27 localities throughout the year, in seven well into the breeding season, with at least six pairs.

281 Long-eared Owl

In marked contrast to recent years, only six birds were recorded at three sites, with none at all in the first part of the winter and none at all at the traditional roosts in Essex. All records are given.

- K Thames Marshes: Locality A, three from November to December. Locality B, two on Dec. 31st (PE,DFY).
- S Littleworth Common, Esher, one on Nov. 14th (Mrs D. Turnbull *per* SDBWS).

282 Short-eared Owl

Up to 35 birds remained from the marked influx in late 1982, over half of which were concentrated in Essex, particularly in the Lea Valley and on the Thames marshes. At least 20 birds spent the first-winter period in the area, and there was evidence of a marked passage in April, when up to 25 birds were recorded. Four birds were seen well into May, the latest being at Bedfont Quarry on the 21st.

In contrast to previous years, numbers at the end of the year were rather meagre, with only about 12 birds present, nine of which were in Essex. Birds were rather late in arriving with the first not until late October, and no evidence of the usual widespread passage movements in October and November. Monthly maxima and summarized records are given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Essex	19	10	12	9	2	0	2	5	9
Others	16	10	13	8	2	0	1	1	2
Total	35	20	25	17	4	0	3	6	11

- E Berwick Ponds, two on Jan. 8th and Dec. 10th (MKD). Rainham Marsh, four in January, two in February, three in March, two in April and the last on May 2nd; two in late October, increasing to four or five by the year's end (mo). West Thurrock, one in March and two in April. Hornchurch Marsh, one on Apr. 3rd (MKD). Waltham Abbey, three in January, two on Feb. 12th, three in March, and one

in April (MJO, MJHR, CGN). Walthamstow Res., five in January, three in February, two in March and one in April (mo). Walthamstow Marsh, two from January to March (TG, MJM). Sewardstone, one from January to March and on May 3rd (DS, CF). Nazeing, singles on Jan. 22nd, Feb. 12th, and Apr. 13th; two during November and December (mo).

- H Abbots Langley, one in January, two in February, and one from Nov. 8th to 11th (mo). Amwell G.P., one from Jan. 31st to Apr. 29th (LVPG). Broxbourne G.P., one on May 2nd (WGL). Cheshunt G.P., two or three on Feb. 2nd (GMH), one remaining until Apr. 24th (MJO). Nazeing Meads, two on Feb. 12th, one on Apr. 13th (BSM). Rye Meads S.F., one from Jan. 4th to Apr. 16th (RMRG). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Mar. 19th (LVPG).
- M Brent Res., three on Jan. 3rd, one remaining until Feb. 5th (NBN, LAB, DAW). Bedfont Quarry, one on May 21st (RRG). Perry Oaks S.F., two in January, one from Feb. 9th to Apr. 4th and two on Apr. 6th; one on Dec. 21st (TJD, JAS). Ponders End S.F., one on Apr. 9th (PJV). Staines Res., singles on Mar. 29th and 30th (GMH, RJF). Shepperton, one on Feb. 6th (HWE).
- B Old Slade N.R., singles on Jan. 3rd, Feb. 13th and two in March (BBC).
- K Thames Marshes, singles on Jan. 22nd, Apr. 7th and 9th (DD, DRG).
- S Hersham G.P., two on Jan. 4th, one on Mar. 28th, and one on Dec. 3rd (mo). Hersham S.F., one on Jan. 16th (S. Spooner *per* SDBWS). Richmond Park, one from Jan. 1st to Apr. 6th (DJB, RHK, RJS). Hogsmill S.F., one on Oct. 30th (J. Gale *per* SDBWS).

284 Nightjar

With a maximum of four churring birds at a mere two sites, the fortunes of this species have reached a disastrously low ebb in the London Area, and this is particularly disappointing following its partial revival last year when several traditional sites were re-occupied. This year the Surrey heaths were again devoid of birds, as was one of the main sites in Herts. Even at the Essex site, now used for over six years, scrub-encroachment threatens the species' continued existence as an Essex breeding bird. All records are given.

- E Ongar, one or two churring on May 26th (MKD, JMH, DFH).
- H Broxbourne Woods, two churring on May 18th and one on May 29th (SBS, MJE, MJH). Symondshyde Wood, none present in 1983 (BTS).
- M Shepperton, (below the bank of Queen Mary Res.) the headless corpse of a still-warm female was found at 06.45 hrs. on July 7th (HWE). This unfortunate bird was presumably the victim of a bird-of-prey; its presence here on this rather odd date gives rise to some speculation as to its immediate origins. This is the first Middlesex record for 18 years.

289 Swift

Arrival was earlier than usual, with the first birds noted at King George V Res., Fishers Green and Cheshunt G.P. on Apr. 19th, and at several other localities the next day. The first main influx occurred during the last week of April when most areas had their first birds. A heavy passage occurred from May 6th to 11th, with concentrations of 1,000+ at King George V Res. on May 6th and 7th, at Staines Res. on May 11th, and 5,000 passing through Wraysbury G.P. in two hours on May 10th. Apart from 1,000 still present at Wraysbury in late

May, and 1,000+ in late June over the River Thames in the Waterloo Bridge area, no other mid-summer count exceeded 500. Inner London: Breeding records were received from Lambrook Terrace, SW6, one pair bred for the seventh successive year. Goldhurst Terrace, NW6, present in breeding season. Ratcliffe, E1, several pairs in May.

Otherwise noted in many areas of Inner London during the summer, with up to 80 over the Serpentine in Hyde Park in May, 40 on July 20th in the Embankment area, 60 over St. James's Park on July 5th, and 100 to 200 in the St. Thomas's Hospital and Waterloo Station area on July 18th.

Departure began as usual in late July and early August and included 700+ flying SW in 90 minutes at Epsom Downs on Aug. 6th. There were no other large movements and most birds had gone by mid-August – earlier than usual. A few individuals lingered until mid-September, with the last reported at Nazeing on Sept. 27th.

291 Alpine Swift

- B Wraysbury G.P. one from May 9th to at least 25th (S. Cox *et al.*).
 S Barn Elms Res., one from Apr. 24th to 26th (DJB, RBH, NPS *et al.*).

Both accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee and they bring the total for the London Area to 11 (see below), assuming that two birds were involved. The Surrey bird arrived with the first main influx of Swifts and was more regularly seen in the afternoons of its brief stay. The Bucks. bird arrived ahead of the main passage of Swifts. It was seen to be attacked by two Swifts on May 10th. (See photograph on p. 62).

1982 Correction

- E The record of one at Ongar on June 29th was not accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, and was published in error.

293 Kingfisher

At least 30 pairs summered in the London Area, and the species was also found in eight other localities during the breeding season. This represents an increase of about 25% on 1982 figures, and is in part due to the relatively mild weather during the winter period. The species was widely reported outside the breeding season. Inner London and all breeding season records are given.

- E Successful pairs were reported from: Fishers Green (2), and Waltham Abbey. Breeding was suspected at: Hornchurch, Nazeing, Netherhall and Sewardstone.
 H Successful pairs were reported from: Amwell G.P., Cheshunt G.P., Stanstead Abbots G.P., and Stocker's Lake (2).
 M A pair bred successfully at Old Park Wood, Harefield. Breeding was suspected at: Harefield Moor G.P., and at Trent Park (3). Inner London: New Street, EC2, one found dead on Aug. 22nd, the corpse was sent to the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) at Tring (PR-S). Hyde Park, one fishing in the Serpentine on Nov. 14th (JC, DGE).
 B Wraysbury G.P., one pair probably bred.
 K Pairs bred at Keston Park and Ruxley G.P., and probably bred at The Tarn at Eltham.
 S A pair bred successfully at Kew Gardens. Suspected breeding was reported from: Aldersgrove at East Molesey, Mickleham and Old Oxted.



ABOVE: *Black-throated Diver* at Holmethorpe S.P. in January 1983.



LEFT: *Alpine Swift* at Barn Elms Res. in April 1983.

BELOW: *Guillemot* on the River Thames at Barnes Bridge in March 1983.

(Photos: R. B. Hastings)



297 Hoopoe

- H Park Street, St. Albans, one on May 7th (JHT).
 M Bushy Park, one on Apr. 23rd (PGG).
 K West Wickham, one in a garden feeding on ants on Apr. 26th (CGI).
 S Leatherhead, one on May 13th (Mrs Deeprise *per* DW).

Four spring records constitute an above-average showing. All occurred in the period from Apr. 23rd to May 13th coinciding with the national peak for spring passage.

298 Wryneck

- E North Romford, one on Apr. 22nd (FB).
 K Hartley near Longfield, one on Sept. 9th was taken into care but died five days later (KNAA). Ruxley G.P., one on Sept. 21st (RNK).

Numbers do fluctuate widely from year-to-year, and at the present time three records, one in spring and two in autumn, parallels the recent average.

300 Green Woodpecker

Present in over 90 localities during the year, and in nearly 70 of these in the breeding season. It was widely reported from Surrey, Herts. and Middlesex, but rather under-recorded from Essex and Kent. It was described as 'common' at Northwood and Oxhey Woods in Herts., while it was the most frequent woodpecker at Hainault (see Table 3). However it is still decreasing in parts of Kent. After last year's first Inner London record for five years, two were reported this year, one in Islington Cemetery on Aug. 12th, and another in Regent's Park on Apr. 27th (NB,TRDt).

Table 3. Numbers of breeding woodpeckers' territories at selected localities in the breeding season 1983.

		<i>Green</i>	<i>Great Spotted</i>	<i>Lesser Spotted</i>
E	Hainault (MKD)	10	8	3
	Dagnam Park (AG)	2	3	3
M	Hampstead Heath (KES)	1	4+	1
	Osterley Park (DGH)	2	5	1
K	Joyden's Wood (DRG)	1	3	1+
S	Wimbledon			
	Common (DLW)	8	11	2

302 Great Spotted Woodpecker

A marked increase in the number of areas reporting this species, with nearly 100 sites during the year. Present in over 60 localities during the breeding season (45+ in 1982), and it is clearly both the most widespread and the most numerous woodpecker in our Area (see Table 3). It was seen as close to the River Thames as Purfleet, West Thurrock and Thamesmead, showing its continued spread into these areas since the *London Atlas*.

Inner London: Regent's Park, probably bred, much drumming in May and June (TRDt, PJS). Westminster Bridge, one flew over on Oct. 4th (PJS).

303 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

With only 36 sites occupied in the breeding season, a marked decline is evident, making this species rather scarce in the London Area. Even outside the breeding season it is less widely reported than a decade ago, and its decline is probably coupled with a loss of habitat as a result of Dutch Elm disease. This was particularly evident in Essex where only three breeding localities were reported. (See Table 3).

Inner London: Kensington Gardens, singles calling on Mar. 11th and Sept. 7th were the only records (DAB).

Localities during the breeding season.

			Inner			
Essex	Herts	Middx.	London	Bucks	Kent	Surrey
3	9	7	0	1	7	9

311 Skylark

The few large flocks reported at the start of the year were mainly confined to Essex and Kent. 150 were present on Rainham Marsh on Feb. 14th, 121 at Ockendon on Jan. 12th, 220 at Berwick Ponds on Feb. 12th and 100+ on Dartford Marsh during the first two months of the year. Again few breeding records were received but included up to 16 singing males at Osterley Park, and six pairs on Wimbledon Common. Autumn passage commenced in mid-October, and many areas reported a W or SW movement at this time. Three-figure flocks included 100+ at Rainham Marsh on Oct. 29th, 120 at Rye Meads S.F. on Oct. 22nd and 100 flying W at Mitcham Common on Oct. 30th. At the end of the year the largest numbers were confined to the north and east of the London Area with 100 at Rainham Marsh in December, 231 at South Ockendon on Dec. 10th, 284 at Symondshyde on Dec. 3rd and 100 at Chelsfield on Dec. 23rd.

Inner London: Regent's Park, seen throughout the year but not in large numbers. Surrey Docks, one calling on June 2nd was the only record and breeding has apparently ceased. County Hall, one flew W on Oct. 13th.

312 Shore Lark

S Barn Elms Res., one on Nov. 12th (RBH,WR *et al.*).

Only the ninth record for the London Area. Inland records are distinctly unusual, although this bird arrived on an appropriate date.

313 Sand Martin

A single at Staines Res. on Mar. 12th was the first, followed by two at the same locality on several subsequent days, but no other birds elsewhere until Mar. 17th. The first main influx occurred in late March and early April when most areas had their first birds. There were no large movements, and apart from 400 at Staines Res. on Apr. 19th no flock exceeded 100. Comments on breeding are given below. Several sites have been destroyed or have moved in recent years, and all such fluctuations should be reported so that an accurate assessment of the breeding population can be made.

Autumn passage began in July, rather earlier than usual, numbers building to an early peak at Staines Res. with 1,000 on July 21st, and at Shortwood Common with 700 on Aug. 10th. Numbers at Rainham

Marsh increased steadily during August, with 700 by mid-month and 1,000+ by Sept. 19th. At King George V Res., 800 on Sept. 2nd increased to 1,250 on 3rd, and larger numbers than usual were recorded at Hainault and Wood Green Res., at this time. Numbers quickly declined in late September, very few being seen in early October (no flock exceeded 20 birds). The last birds reported were at Rainham Marsh on Oct. 15th.

Inner London: Regent's Park, recorded from July 23rd to Oct. 6th; there were no spring sightings. Hyde Park, singles on Mar. 25th, Apr. 30th and three on Sept. 7th. Vincent Terrace, two on Sept. 3rd.

Breeding records were as follows:

- E Royden, 50 pairs. Fishers Green, 20 pairs. Lea Valley Reservoirs, 30 pairs nesting in drain-holes. South Stifford, 120+ pairs. South Hornchurch, 10 pairs. Berwick Ponds area, several pairs bred.
- H Broxbournebury, 100 occupied holes. Park Street, ten nests. Tyttenhanger G.P., 12 to 24 pairs.
- M Harefield, Grand Union Canal, 11 pairs nesting in drainage-holes. Old Park Wood at Harefield, four nests.
- S Hogsmill, 'a small colony'. Holmethorpe S.P., 50 pairs. Buckland S.P., 30 pairs. Hersham G.P., 40+ pairs breeding. Godstone N.R., 'a small colony'.

314 Swallow

Birds were rather late in arriving this year, and the first was at Stone Marsh on Apr. 9th. The following two days saw the species reported from many other sites, but like the Sand Martin, few large movements were reported, 300 flying N over Epsom Downs on May 9th being by far the largest number seen. Few breeding records were received, and none indicated any change of status.

Autumn passage began in August, but some impressive pre-migration roosts were occupied in Herts. and Essex, with 500 at Maple Cross S.F., on July 25th and 3,000+ at Berwick Ponds on Aug. 21st. Good numbers moved through the Area in late August and September, with 600 at Stocker's Farm on Aug. 25th, 500 at Rye Meads S.F. on Sept. 11th and 500 flying SW over Epsom Downs in 90 minutes on Sept. 16th. Small numbers continued to be reported throughout October, but most had gone by mid-month. There were only two November records, one in the Bromley area on Nov. 3rd and one at Barn Elms Res. on the 6th.

Inner London: Regent's Park, recorded from Apr. 14th to Oct. 20th. Hyde Park, two on Apr. 20th and May 6th and singles on Apr. 22nd and 29th and May 4th. Kensington Gardens, 14 on Sept. 20th.

316 House Martin

The first sightings were of singles at Surbiton on Apr. 1st and at Bromley Common on Apr. 7th, and as with the Swallow, most areas had their first birds a few days later. Breeding sites were occupied by the end of the month, but as with the previous two species there were no large movements and only two counts exceeded 100. An increase was noted in the Alexandra Park area, and 89 nests were found in the Tadworth and Walton-on-the-Hill area. Comparative counts from other areas would be welcome.

Return passage began in late August, and peaked in early September

with 2,000 at Staines Res. on Sept. 10th, 500 at King George V Res. and 700 at Wraysbury G.P. also on the 10th; 600 at Maple Cross S.F. on Sept. 17th, and 500 at Barn Elms Res. on Sept. 21st. 520 remained at Barn Elms Res. on Oct. 10th, with smaller numbers at several other sites throughout the month.

Inner London breeding records: bred at Winslow Road, Clancarty Road, and Alderville Road, all SW6. Comeragh Road, W14, 26 nests. Barton Road, W14, two nests. Challoner Street, W14, six nests. Beaumont Avenue, W14, 15 nests. Cambridge Heath Road, present in breeding season. Shore Road, E9, four nests. Cassland Road, E9, 11 nests. Southgate Road, N1, eight nests. Liverpool Street, N1, one nest. Limehouse Basin, E1, two nests. Albert Gate, Kensington, possibly an increase in breeding numbers.

Up to 55 seen in various parts of Inner London from Apr. 17th until the latest of the year in Regent's Park on Nov. 10th.

320 Tree Pipit

There was an increase in breeding season records, the probable overall total being in excess of 80 pairs at 27 sites. The first arrival was at Hainault Forest on Apr. 9th, and the last was seen at Rainham Marsh on Oct. 15th. Breeding season distribution is given. No Inner London records were received.

- E Bedfords Park, three pairs. Brentwood, one pair. Dagnam Park, one pair. Epping Forest, at least 15 singing males. Hainault, six pairs. Havering, two pairs. North Weald, one pair.
- H There was more coverage compared with 1982. Broxbourne Woods, at least three pairs. Bishop's Wood, one pair and a singing male. Hertford Heath, Hoddesdon Park Wood and Monks Wood all held singing males. Northaw Great Wood, at least three singing males and one pair. Symondshyde, at least one pair. Wormley Woods, five pairs.
- M Ruislip Common, a singing male throughout May, breeding suspected.
- K Birds present in the breeding season at High Elms, Hoblingwell Wood and at Meenfield Wood, but no proof of nesting.
- S Ashtead Common, one singing male. Esher, one singing male. The overall total for Tadworth, Walton and Headley Heaths was 17 pairs. Wimbledon Common, five pairs.

322 Meadow Pipit

The majority of breeding pairs continues to be shared between Essex and Surrey. Numbers in the early part of the year hardly rose above 100 at any locality with the exception of Beddington S.F., where 200 were counted during February. A well reported widespread movement occurred from late September through October and sustained watches were done at Aberdeen Park, Drayton Park, Rye Meads S.F. and Staines Res., with peaks exceeding 250 at Aberdeen Park and Staines Res. Rye Meads S.F. had the highest figures in November and December, with 200 wintering. Breeding season distribution and Inner London records are given.

- E Thames Marshes between Aveley and Beckton, at least 60 pairs were present. The inland stretch from South Stifford to Berwick Ponds held a minimum of 12 pairs. Hornchurch Airfield, 12 pairs.
- H Pairs bred at Amwell G.P. and Croxley Moor.
- M Staines Moor, bred.

- K Dartford Heath, 15 to 20 pairs. Thamesmead, at least one pair nested.
- S Mitcham Common, one pair bred. Wimbledon Common, 13 pairs. Inner London: Surrey Docks, at least four pairs holding territories.

324a Rock Pipit

Rainham Marsh had a maximum of seven on Jan. 29th, otherwise up to four from January to March. On the Kent side of the river there were between four and six at Dartford Marsh in the same period and a maximum of nine at Swanscombe. Away from the River Thames there was one at Rye Meads S.F. during February. Records in spring consisted of one at Walthamstow Res. on Mar. 5th and at Barn Elms Res. in April, where an individual showing characters of the Scandinavian race *littoralis* was present from the 8th to 11th (RBH,NPS). In autumn there were inland records from eight areas, with a maximum of four over Aberdeen Park, Highbury on Oct. 13th. Singles were reported from Brent Res. on Nov. 6th, Wm. Girling Res. on Oct. 29th and other Lea Valley waters during October and November. Barn Elms Res. had singles on several dates in September and October. Three were at Queen Mary Res. on Oct. 30th and at King George V Res. on Nov. 12th. Similar numbers wintered at Rainham Marsh and Dartford. A single bird appeared at Rye Meads S.F. in late December.

324b Water Pipit

- E King George V Res. and Sewardstone Marsh, one from Apr. 1st to 3rd (PJV *et al.*). Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 22nd (AJG). Rainham Marsh, two on Oct. 29th and one during November and December (MKD,RBH).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one on Apr. 3rd. Broxbourne G.P., one on Dec. 18th (GJW). Rye Meads S.F., two in January and February and one throughout March (RMRG), two on Apr. 4th with singles on Apr. 10th and 17th (LVPG). At the end of the year singles on Oct. 29th, Nov. 4th and 11th with one or two throughout December (RMRG). Stocker's Farm, one from Feb. 13th to Apr. 4th (RRD,IGJ *et al.*).
- M Springwell, singles on Feb. 22nd, Mar. 13th, Dec. 22nd and 30th (ART,TRD).
- K Crossness, one on Nov. 1st (PJS). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 2nd and 17th (AHH,DRHe). Thamesmead, one on Jan. 6th and 31st (PJS).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 7th (NPS). Beddington S.F., a maximum of four from Apr. 4th to 9th, also singles on Mar. 13th and 25th (GDJM). In autumn between two and four were seen from Oct. 25th to the end of the year (SJA). Hogsmill S.F., up to four on many dates in November and December. Hersham S.F. and G.P., three or four on Jan. 4th, and a single between 16th and 20th (WRI).

325 Yellow Wagtail

The first arrival in spring was at Bromley Common on Apr. 7th and the final sighting of the year was at Wm. Girling Res. on Oct. 17th. There was no noticeable change in breeding season status. Breeding distribution, Inner London records and birds showing characters of the Blue-headed (*flava*) race are given.

- E Thames marshes from Beckton to Rainham, at least 30 pairs. A pair of Blue-headed birds was seen at Rainham during April and May and also one male on July 21st (MKD,NI *et al.*). Lea Valley from Nazeing

to Walthamstow, about 40 pairs. Walthamstow Marsh, a Blue-headed male paired with a normal female (TG,GJW *et al.*).

H Amwell G.P., five pairs bred. One pair bred at Cole Green and another probably bred at Tyttenhanger G.P. (SP,GJW *et al.*). Blue-headed males at Hilfield Park Res., Rye Meads S.F., and Stocker's Lake in April and May (CIB,RRD *et al.*).

M Nesting pairs at Gillespie Road Park, Staines Res. and Queen Mary Res. and a male Blue-headed at Staines Res. on four dates in April (GMH,PN *et al.*). Stanwell Cemetery, a Blue-headed male on July 20th (MJW). Inner London: Regent's Park, singles in early May and late August (TRDt). Kensington Gardens, two on Sept. 6th (DAB).

K Breeding pairs reported from Dartford Marsh and Thamesmead, with a Blue-headed male at Thamesmead on Apr. 15th (PE,DRG).

S Beddington S.F., at least three pairs bred. Richmond Park, one pair bred (RHK,NHM). Barn Elms Res., single Blue-headed birds on six dates between Apr. 13th and May 4th (RBH *et al.*).

Inner London: Surrey Docks, at least two pairs holding territory in June (DM).

327 Grey Wagtail

A slight decrease in the reported numbers of breeding pairs. It will be difficult in future to determine the status if coverage fails. We appeal for more information. Breeding distribution and maximum wintering figures are given.

E Lea Valley Reservoirs, at least three pairs nested. Barking, one pair bred. Up to six wintering at King George V Res.

H Troy Mill G.P., one pair bred. Merchant Taylors, a pair with young. Croxley Mill, one pair bred.

M Successful breeding recorded at Dollis Brook, Little Britain Lake, Trent Park, Wembley and Wood Green Res. Wintering birds at Staines Res. peaked at 11 in early December.

K Definite proof of breeding at Eltham and Foots Cray Meadows. Also pairs present in the breeding season at Beckenham, Bromley, Lewisham and Sevenoaks G.P.

S Pairs bred at Headley, Kingston, Oxted, Richmond Park, Wimbledon Common and on the River Wandle at Mordenhall Park. Barn Elms Res., the maximum wintering number was seven on Nov. 17th.

328a Pied Wagtail

Coverage of this species was less than in previous years. Counts, roosts and Inner London records are given.

E Rainham Marsh, pre-roost gatherings of 60 or more during October, November and December.

H Maple Cross S.F., 200 on July 13th. The roost at Rye House Power Station no longer exists owing to closure of the works.

M Staines Res., 100 on Dec. 4th. Harefield Moor G.P., 52 flying to roost on Oct. 22nd. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, three or four possible breeding pairs. Also a pair is believed to have bred in Regent's Park.

K The roost at the Civic Hall, Orpington held 600 on Feb. 26th and 300 on Dec. 30th. Dunton Green, maxima of 525 at roost on Feb. 9th and 490 on Dec. 5th.

S Hersham, pre-roost gathering of 100 on the roof of an industrial estate in October.

328b White Wagtail

- E A total of 38 reported from six localities between Mar. 12th and May 5th, with a maximum of seven at Rainham Marsh on Apr. 15th (MKD,PJV *et al.*).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Mar. 31st. Hampermill Lake, four on Apr. 1st. Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Apr. 7th. Stocker's Lake, singles on Apr. 1st and 20th, two on May 7th (CCL,TRD *et al.*).
- M Staines Res., 15 sightings from Mar. 3rd to Apr. 27th, with peaks of five on Apr. 13th and seven on 21st (GMH,JAH *et al.*).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Apr. 4th (AHH).
- S Barn Elms Res., a maximum of five between Apr. 10th and 18th, otherwise up to three on several dates during March and April (RBH *et al.*). Hersham S.F., one on Feb. 26th (SDBWS). Richmond Park, one on Apr. 6th (RJS).

331 Wren

- H Stocker's Lake, 32 pairs bred, an increase from 20 in 1982. Rye Meads S.F., the highest count was 44 on Nov. 27th. Hampermill Lake, 20 on Dec. 3rd.
- M Osterley Park, 21 territories on the census plot, a further increase on previous years. Inner London: reported from six localities but known to breed only in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 35 to 40 counted in May and June. Joyden's Wood, numbers were reported as normal.

333 Dunnock

Observations and comments on this species indicated a high success rate and a widespread distribution.

- M Chiswick House grounds, 10 territories. Osterley Park, 10 territories, which is a return to normal numbers. Inner London: Belgrave Square, a pair may have bred. Breeding proved in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. Shadwell, E1, one singing in May.

336 Robin

Fewer records were received than in previous years. A minority of dedicated census workers continue to cover certain areas, but more information is still wanted.

- M Osterley Park, 17 territories counted. Inner London: Bred in Belgrave Square, Kensington Gardens and St. James's Park.

338 Nightingale

An increase in numbers is indicated by records received. However, some areas are under-reported compared with previous years.

- E Epping Forest, four singing males present in May and June (PAB *et al.*). Hainault Forest, two pairs seen with young, and two other singing males were also present (MKD,CGN).
- H Singing males were reported from Cowheath Wood, Croxley Mill and Dobbs Weir Power Station. Northaw Great Wood, one pair bred (HNHS *et al.*). Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 15th. Amwell G.P., one on Aug. 12th (RMRG,TPA).
- M Queen Mary G.P., a juvenile on July 30th (HRG).
- K Singing males reported at Hayes, Hither Green Cemetery, Darrick Wood, and Sevenoaks G.P. during May and June (RJC,GDN,AHH).
- S Ashted Common, two singing males (WRI). Bookham Common,

two singing males (RAF). Chessington, a singing male on Apr. 24th (SDBWS).

1981 Correction

- M Page 65 line five should read 'Queen Mary G.P., a juvenile trapped on July 15th, an adult ringed on July 18th was retrapped on 25th, and another juvenile trapped on Aug. 8th (HRG)'.

340 Bluethroat

- H Rye Meads S.F., a male of the white-spotted race *L. s. cyanecula* of Central and Southern Europe was trapped on Apr. 4th (RMRG,GJW).

This is the 12th record for the London Area and the third in spring. The two previous spring individuals were both of the red-spotted race *L. s. svecica*; this is the first London record of this race.

342 Black Redstart

The distribution of pairs and singing males in the breeding season is given. Birds were seen at 14 localities on spring passage and at 11 in autumn. Wintering birds were present at Chessington, Drayton Park, Kenton, King George V Res., Queen Mary Res. and Staines Res. Spring passage lasted from Mar. 13th to May 6th involving 21 individuals; autumn passage began on Sept. 9th and extended until Nov. 26th and also involved 21 individuals.

		<i>Pairs bred</i>	<i>Pairs present</i>	<i>Singing male(s)</i>	<i>Observer</i>
E	Beckton Gas Works	2			KB
	Stratford	1			DFH
M	Brimsdown		1		CFN
	Drayton Park	1			CA
	Tottenham		1		LG
	Inner London:				
	Broad Street			1	RJS
	Covent Garden	1			RJS
	Long Acre, WC2	1			MDN
	St. Pancras	1			MLL
	Whitehall			1	PB
K	Littlebrook	2			DRG
S	Croydon			2+	MO
	Waddon		1		NDH
	Inner London:				
	Bankside Power Station		1		RS
	Battersea Power Station			1	RBH
	Clapham			1	PCT
	Waterloo			1	PJS
	Totals	9	4	7	

A slight increase on 1982 totals, but below figures in years prior to this. However the actual number of breeding pairs may be higher than the above table indicates, as many sites are of difficult access to observers. If it can be assumed that 20 pairs were present overall, then there is room for optimism about the species's future in the London Area.

1981 Additional Record

- M Inner London: a male singing in the Broad Street/Liverpool Street Station area during the spring and early summer (MRC).

343 Redstart

The decline of this species continues. Birds were present in only two possible breeding sites during the year. Concern has been expressed before about the scarcity of this species in the last few years. All records are given.

- E Epping Forest, only one singing male in summer (JF). Dagnam Park, one or two in August and September (AG). Harlow Woods, two on Sept. 25th (TW). Havering, one on Sept. 25th (MKD). Sewardstone, one on Apr. 17th (CFn). West Thurrock, two on Oct. 1st and an exceptionally late bird on Nov. 7th (MKD).
- H Northaw Great Wood, one or more in June (CD). Singles in spring at Amwell G.P. on May 5th, Rye Meads S.F. from Apr. 17th to 21st and Stanstead Abbots G.P. on Apr. 21st (RMRG *et al.*). Batlers Green, Radlett, an adult and juvenile on Sept. 10th (JHT).
- M In spring singles at Hampstead Heath on Apr. 23rd, Frays Meadows, Uxbridge, on May 11th, Heston on May 22nd and Queen Mary G.P. on Apr. 16th (TN *et al.*). In autumn there were singles between Aug. 18th and Sept. 24th at Belmont Farm, Hampstead Heath, Queen Mary G.P., Queen Mary Res., Sipson, Stanwell and Woodside Park (HRG, KES *et al.*). Inner London: Regent's Park, two on Apr. 18th and one in the next few days until the 28th. In autumn singles were ringed on Aug. 19th and Sept. 29th and two were present on Sept. 27th (TRDt, JPW).
- B Wraysbury G.P., one on July 5th (RRG).
- K Hither Green Cemetery, a very early bird on Mar. 29th, also singles on May 5th and Aug. 13th (DD). Orpington, singles on Apr. 15th and May 4th (RJC, BB). Thamesmead, one on Oct. 31st (PJS).
- S Beddington S.F., one on Sept. 17th. Epsom, one on Aug. 20th. Tooting, one on May 10th (ESB, RHK, GDJM).

344 Whinchat

One on Jan. 9th at Waltham Abbey (HW), is apparently only the second winter record in the London Area, the first being as long ago as Dec. 26th 1934. Spring passage started suddenly on Apr. 16th and a small influx occurred at several localities over the next few days. Another peak occurred around May 1st with reports from at least ten areas. Numbers decreased until the last was seen on May 30th at Beddington S.F. No reports of nesting were received. The first in autumn was also at Beddington S.F. on July 31st. Early and mid-August saw very few migrants but the latter part of the month had a heavier passage with a peak of eight at both Beddington S.F. and Rainham Marsh on 28th. The highest figures in September were at Osterley Park and Beddington S.F., which both peaked with totals of ten on Sept. 7th and 18th respectively.

Inner London: Regent's Park, individuals seen on May 4th and Sept. 16th coincided with the peaks noticed elsewhere (TRDt).

345 Stonechat

There was a maximum of 32 breeding pairs reported, an increase of about ten compared with 1982. Essex and Kent shared the majority of pairs, but there is a continued decrease in records since 1979 from Surrey sites which were previously occupied. Winter records were more numerous this year.

- E Barking and Hornchurch each had two pairs. Beckton, two pairs

bred. Rainham Marsh, 12 pairs bred, some having two or three broods; a maximum of 12 in late December. West Thurrock, four pairs bred.

- M Bedfont Quarry, two pairs in June, one had a nest containing five eggs. Staines Res., a maximum of four during the winter. Inner London: a female on waste ground between Frederica Street and Vale Royal, near Caledonian Road on Apr. 24th.
- K Dartford Marsh, a pair seen with young. Elmers End S.F., one pair bred. Littlebrook G.P., three pairs bred. Thamesmead, two pairs bred.
- S Beddington S.F., a maximum of nine in November. Mitcham Common, two pairs bred. Headley Heath, one pair present.

346 Wheatear

This species continues to receive excellent coverage. After the arrival of two on Mar. 9th at Rainham Marsh, no less than nine localities received migrants in the next few days. There was a greater volume of March records than usual followed by a rather heavy April passage. At Beddington S.F. there were 11 on Apr. 3rd, but Rainham Marsh held the maximum numbers with 20 on the 14th and 25 on the 30th. On May 2nd there were still 18 at Rainham Marsh, and Beddington S.F. had a peak of ten. The last May record was on the 15th at Wraysbury G.P. Two at Walthamstow on June 1st were not relocated, nor was a single at Fishers Green on the 4th. A juvenile on July 30th at Perry Oaks S.F. was probably the first of the autumn passage and the next was on Aug. 2nd at St. Paul's Cray. August movements were rather light with no more than four reported anywhere. September passage was heavier with a maximum of eight at Perry Oaks S.F. on 12th. Throughout October one or two birds were noted at 14 localities. Five November records were all singles, at St. Paul's Cray on the 5th, Barn Elms Res. on the 6th and the 13th, London Airport on the 9th, Queen Mother Res. on the 13th, and finally at Walthamstow Res. on the 17th. Inner London: Regent's Park, singles on Apr. 25th, Aug. 11th and Sept. 13th.

359 Ring Ouzel

- H Cheshunt G.P., one on Oct. 22nd (HPM).
- M Bentley Priory, one on Apr. 12th (RCF). Hampstead Cemetery, one on Apr. 20th (RW). Staines Res., one on Apr. 14th (RBH,MJW).
- The quietest year since 1978, when only three birds were seen.

1980 Correction

- M Queen Mary Res., Nov. 1st, this was a female, not first-year male as published (HRG).

1981 Additional Record

- M Brent Res., a male on Oct. 4th (ACW).

1982 Additional Record

- M Parliament Hill Fields, a male on Apr. 8th (HHOR).

360 Blackbird

An increase in records received, especially for Inner London. One was in full song on Jan. 9th at Wallington, and also a nest with five eggs was found at Thorpe Water Park in the same month. In late December at Oxted another male in full song coincided with a mild spell. 22 territories were counted in Osterley Park in the regularly

reported census plot, compared with 13 in previous years. Outside the plot there were at least 30 territories elsewhere in the Park. Autumn movements took place in November, but not apparently on the scale of previous years. In Kew Gardens 244 were counted during December. Inner London: Breeding reported from Belgrave Square, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, King Edward Memorial Park, Tavistock Square, Tower of London, St. James's Park, and New River Walk. There were counts of 50 in Battersea Park on Feb. 21st and 13 in Green Park on Jan. 28th.

364 Fieldfare

At the beginning of the year numbers were unspectacular, although the species was widely reported. The highest number was at Batlers Green, Radlett, where up to 1,000 were seen from Jan. 14th until the end of February, these birds roosted at Park Street (H) and Hilfield Park Res., but by Mar. 5th only 150 were present. A few other flocks of over 100 were reported in January from Hainault and Staines Res., with slightly larger numbers at Osterley Park, Bromley Common and Symondshyde (H). Records in March were below-average with a maximum of 150 at Oxshott and Bromley Common. The signs of a return passage began on Apr. 1st with 350 at Sevenoaks, and 100 at Colney Heath. After a peak of 500 at Harlow on 9th numbers declined quickly, no more were seen after five at Symondshyde (H) on Apr. 23rd. Autumn movements started on Sept. 13th at Staines Res., followed by others on 28th and 29th at Beddington S.F., Fooks Cray Meadows and Tadworth (S). October passage was light with a maximum of 110 at Bromley on 20th. At Bexley there was a roost of 300 during November and December, this exceeded all other areas by at least 100 at the end of the year. Inner London: Regent's Park, three on Nov. 16th and 40 on Dec. 10th.

365 Song Thrush

In the census plot at Osterley Park, 12 territories were counted compared with ten in 1982. The maximum concentration was between 70 and 80 at Stonehill Farm, Wilmington (K), in late November, and included birds of continental origin. Evidence of an autumn influx was noticed in late September and October at several places including Dartford Marsh, Ilford, the Lea Valley Reservoirs, East Finchley, Park Street (H), and Rainham Marsh. An increase in wintering populations amidst flocks of Redwings was reported from Lea Valley areas and Rainham Marsh. At Oxted in late December, during a mild spell, full song was heard. Inner London: Bred in Hyde Park, St. James's Park, Haggerston, E8, and Victoria Park, E9.

366 Redwing

At the beginning of the year this species appeared more numerous than Fieldfares, with flocks of between 200 and 300 reported from seven localities, and a maximum of 450 at Yewlands Meadow (S) on Jan. 11th. A roost at Queen Mary G.P. held 115 on Feb. 12th and an individual caught there by the Hersham Ringing Group on Mar. 5th showed characters of the Icelandic race *T. i. coburni*. There were no more reports after seven at Mitcham Common on Apr. 24th. The first in autumn were on Oct. 3rd at Park Street (H) and Tadworth (S). No significant numbers were seen until 200 flew W at Staines Res. on the 13th. There was a very noticeable increase in late October and

early November, with 600 moving over Woodmansterne on Oct. 30th and 700 at Wimbledon Common on Nov. 12th. Also up to 300 over Crystal Palace Park, Regent's Park, and Queen Mary G.P. during this period of migration. Flocks containing 100 or more were reported from six localities in November and December with a maximum of 385 at Bromley Common on Dec. 31st.

367 Mistle Thrush

Flocks at the end of the breeding season included 30 at Nazeing on July 22nd, 28 at Chiswick on Sept. 11th, 40 at Fetcham Park on Sept. 28th, 45 at Bromley Common on Sept. 2nd and 26 at Richmond Park on Sept. 8th. There were eight additional smaller counts made in this period. At Wimbledon Common an estimate of 19 breeding pairs was the most significant count made. During a mild spell in late December one or more singing birds were noted at Oxted. Inner London: Bred in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens and a single reported from St. James's Park on Oct. 14th.

- H Cassiobury Park, the xanthocroic individual which was reported last year was still present (i.e. all normal colours replaced by a suffusion of yellow).

369 Cetti's Warbler

- E/H In the Lea Valley, one on Nov. 3rd (TPA), and one on several dates from Nov. 30th to the end of the year at a different locality (DNC *et al.*) were the only records.

373 Grasshopper Warbler

Four pairs are known to have bred compared with only two in 1982, but there were only seven other singing males present for ten days or more in the breeding season and another seven singing males reported only once or twice during the migration period suggesting that the decline continues. All records are given.

- E Fishers Green, one pair bred; five on July 23rd. Harlow Woods, one singing in June and July. West Thurrock Marsh, one singing on Apr. 28th.
- H Amwell G.P., one pair bred. Broxbourne Woods, one singing on May 22nd and throughout June. Rye House RSPB reserve, one on Apr. 30th. Rye Meads S.F., singles on Apr. 23rd, May 1st and 21st and on Aug. 21st and 29th.
- M Bedfont Quarry, one singing on June 11th.
- K Bromley Common, one singing from May 6th to 29th. Crayford Ness, one singing on Apr. 9th. Hayes, one singing from May 8th to 18th.
- S Ashted Common, nest of one pair found on May 25th and a pair with newly-fledged young at another locality on June 8th; three other singing males. Epsom Common, singles on May 4th and Sept. 3rd.

378 Sedge Warbler

The approximate number of territories reported during the breeding season was 125 in Essex, 170 in Herts., 20 in Middx., 25 in Bucks., 10 in Kent and 13 in Surrey. Localities with 10 or more territories (totals in brackets) and all Inner London records are given below.

- E Berwick Ponds (12), Fishers Green (27), Netherhall (13), Rainham

Marsh (15), Sewardstone (15), West Thurrock (10), Walthamstow Marsh (19).

- H Broxbourne G.P. (22), Cheshunt G.P. (63), Rye Meads S.F. (40), Stocker's Lake (10).
 M Inner London: Regent's Park, two on Apr. 5th, May 2nd and 3rd, and one on June 10th.
 B Wraysbury G.P. (25).

382 Reed Warbler

The approximate number of territories reported during the breeding season was 164 in Essex, 80 in Herts., 35 in Middx., 15 in Bucks., 45 in Kent and 10 in Surrey. Localities with 10 or more territories (totals in brackets), all Inner London records and two cases of breeding near the Inner London boundary are given.

- E Berwick Ponds (25), Fishers Green (17), Ockendon (15), Rainham Marsh (40), West Thurrock (25), Walthamstow Marsh (14).
 H Broxbourne G.P. (10), Rye Meads S.F. (40), Stocker's Lake (10).
 M Bedfont Quarry (20). Inner London: Regent's Park, one from May 2nd to 11th, two on May 24th, one remaining until Aug. 1st.
 B Wraysbury G.P. (15).
 K Thamesmead and Woolwich Ranges (15).
 S Barn Elms Res., one pair bred raising three young. Lonsdale Road Res., three territories, one nest with eggs found. Inner London: Waterloo, one in subdued song in flower and shrubbery beds below road level at a roundabout on May 31st.

387 Icterine Warbler

- S Cheam, one singing in Sears Park on June 10th (SJH).
 Only the second for the London Area, the first having been in 1965.

388 Melodious Warbler

- K Ruxley G.P., one singing on June 11th (SJG).
 The fifth record for the London Area, the first having been seen as recently as 1961.

397 Lesser Whitethroat

Only 26 pairs are known to have bred, surely an under-statement of the true position. Excluding presumed passage migrants there were approximately 32 additional territories making a total of 58 compared with 68 in 1982. The distribution was 14 in Essex, five in Herts., nine in Middx., 12 in Kent and 18 in Surrey. Two ringing groups reported substantial numbers on the autumn passage, the maxima being 50 at Rye Meads S.F. on Aug. 27th and 30 at Queen Mary G.P. on Sept. 10th. All had left by Oct. 10th, but a very late bird was trapped and ringed at Queen Mary G.P. on Nov. 19th. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Hyde Park, one on May 6th. Also recorded in Regent's Park on Apr. 25th and from Aug. 14th to 16th.

398 Whitethroat

The number of territories was approximately 180 compared with 172 in 1982. The distribution was 75 in Essex, seven in Herts., 11 in Middx., three in Bucks., 24 in Kent and 60 in Surrey. In contrast to

the Lesser Whitethroat the autumn passage was light, being described as thin at Queen Mary G.P. and the maximum at Rye Meads S.F. being only ten on Aug. 21st. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Kensington Gardens, singles on May 4th and Aug. 13th. Also recorded in Regent's Park on May 6th.

399 Garden Warbler

The approximate number of territories reported was 117, a substantial increase over the total for 1982 which was 72. Yet at only one locality did the observers comment on a local increase over the previous year. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Hyde Park, one on Apr. 26th. Regent's Park, four on May 3rd and one on the 25th; also seen on Apr. 22nd and Aug. 16th but numbers not given.

400 Blackcap

Some high breeding populations were reported including 35 pairs at Berwick Ponds, 25 pairs at Havering, 23 singing males in June at Hampstead Heath and 45 pairs at Wimbledon Common. 13 pairs bred at Stocker's Lake compared with seven or eight in 1982. A summary of winter records and all Inner London records are given.

	<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>January and February: individuals</i>	2	3	4	5	3	17
<i>localities</i>	2	3	3	4	2	14
<i>November and December: individuals</i>	1	1	3	3	6	14
<i>localities</i>	1	1	3	3	6	14

- M Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, at least three territories. Regent's Park, bred; a family party on June 30th. Aberdare Gardens, NW6, one in song for two hours on May 29th. Holland Park, one singing on Mar. 4th. New River Walk, one singing on Mar. 7th.

- S Inner London: Battersea Park, one on Apr. 28th.

408 Wood Warbler

Bred at five localities, the highest number since 1975. There were also some 22 singing males at the end of May or in June. All records are given.

- E Epping Forest, three singing males in June. Hainault, one pair bred successfully. Valentines Park, one singing on May 15th.
- H Bushey, one on June 13th. Cheshunt G.P., singles on Apr. 24th and 25th and May 2nd. Croxley Hall G.P., one on Apr. 24th. Hampermill Lake, one on Apr. 29th, two on May 17th. Maple Cross S.F., one on Apr. 23rd. Northaw Great Wood, at least three singing males on Apr. 25th and June 5th; a pair carrying food on June 6th. Whippendell Wood, one on May 8th.
- M Hampstead Heath, one on Aug. 12th. Ruislip, one pair bred successfully in Mad Bess Wood. Trent Park, one singing on May 30th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one singing on Apr. 26th. Regent's Park, recorded on Apr. 30th, May 3rd, 4th and 6th, two on the latter date.
- K Bromley Common, singles on May 5th and July 29th. Orpington, one on May 5th and one at Darrick Wood on Apr. 30th. Petts Wood, two singing males on Apr. 30th. Sevenoaks G.P., one from Apr. 17th to 30th. Thamesmead, one on Aug. 3rd.

S Addington Hills, two singing males on May 30th, three males and a female on June 1st, one singing on June 7th. Banstead Wood, one singing on May 15th, two on May 14th and 21st. Bookham Common, one singing on May 8th, 21st and 22nd. Esher, a nest and six eggs at Fairmile Common on May 27th; a male singing on June 17th and 24th at West End Common. Headley Heath, three singing males by the end of May; a pair bred in June. Limpsfield Chart, one singing on May 7th and June 5th. Limpsfield Common, two singing on May 15th and June 5th. Nower Wood, three singing males by the end of May, one seen with a presumed female. Tilburstow Hill, one singing on May 30th. Wimbledon Common, singles on Apr. 29th, May 1st and 13th.

1982 Additional Record

M Hampstead Heath, one singing on Apr. 23rd. This pre-dates the earliest record in 1982, and affects the Table in *LBR* 47:8.

409 Chiffchaff

A summary of winter records is followed by Inner London records.

	<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>January and February: individuals</i>	1	20	5	3	9	—	38
<i>localities</i>	1	8	3	2	3	—	17
<i>November and December: individuals</i>	2	6	12	1	5	2	28
<i>localities</i>	2	6	6	1	4	2	21

M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, singles on five dates in April and on May 6th; one on Sept. 6th, two on Sept. 20th, one on Oct. 4th. Regent's Park, present during the breeding season, probably bred, but not proven; one on Oct. 19th. St. James's Park, singles on Apr. 15th, Sept. 28th and 29th, Oct. 4th, 10th and 18th.

S Jubilee Gardens, South Bank, one on Oct. 4th.

410 Willow Warbler

A bird wintered in the observers' garden at Twickenham from Dec. 18th 1982 until Mar. 13th (BG, DG). Although there have been a few records of birds seen in our Area during the winter months, this appears to be the first case of one being present for a substantial part of the winter. There were two other records during the winter period: one in song at Cheshunt G.P. on Jan. 30th (MAH, RMH) and one at Chadwell Heath on Dec. 19th (RG). The breeding population of Wimbledon Common was estimated as 111 pairs compared with 119 in 1982 (DLW). Inner London records are given.

M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, up to five on spring migration, Apr. 15th to May 2nd; autumn passage from Aug. 2nd to Sept. 7th with maxima of 14 on Aug. 13th and 11 on Aug. 16th. Regent's Park, noted on Apr. 9th and Sept. 30th. St. James's Park, a maximum of three during the period Apr. 14th to 27th. New River Walk, one singing on May 3rd.

S Battersea Park, one on Apr. 28th.

411 Goldcrest

There was a widespread influx at the end of September and in October, numbers remaining high until the end of the year. Some of the larger numbers noted were 50 at Hainault on Oct. 15th, 40 at Queen Mary G.P. on Oct. 22nd and 30th (more abundant than since the mid-1970s), 30 at Bromley Common on Nov. 20th, 35 at Thorndon Park on Dec. 10th, 40 at Hayes Common on Dec. 26th and

44 at Chislehurst on Dec. 30th. There were records from built-up areas where the birds had not been seen before. Comments on the breeding season, which is unsatisfactorily covered, and Inner London records are given.

- E 18 territories reported from five localities.
- H No breeding reported.
- M Ten pairs believed to be breeding at Chiswick, ten territories held in Osterley Park and four territories in the Mill Hill area, but apparently only one other pair in the rest of the county. Inner London: Regent's Park, one pair bred, the second for the park. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, one or two on Mar. 14th, Apr. 6th and 9th and 22nd and 23rd; five on Sept. 25th then up to three on several dates until Dec. 23rd. St. James's Park, one or two between Oct. 21st and Dec. 21st. Holland Park, one on Mar. 4th.
- B Iver, an adult with a juvenile on July 19th.
- K Bred or territories at Bexley, Bromley Common, Eltham and Hither Green.
- S Bred at Hurst Green and Wimbledon Common. Inner London: Battersea Park, one on Apr. 28th.

412 Firecrest

Recorded from 19 localities, the widest distribution yet. All records are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, a male singing on Apr. 1st and 9th (MKD). Epping Forest, a male on Jan. 30th (TG). Hainault, a male singing on May 2nd and in June (MKD). Harlow Woods, a male singing in May (TW). Ongar, one ringed on Apr. 3rd and a different bird on the 13th (MU).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one on Jan. 2nd, 22nd, 23rd and Feb. 7th (ID, GJW *et al.*). Hilfield Park Res., a male singing on May 13th (CIB). Maple Cross S.F., one trapped on Oct. 22nd (MCRG). Panshanger, a male on Apr. 4th (PDW). Rye Meads S.F., a male trapped on Oct. 30th (RMRG).
- M Hampstead Heath, a male singing on June 4th (MN).
- K Elmers End S.F., one on May 15th (DCN). Ruxley G.P., one until Feb. 27th had been present in December 1982 (SJG *et al.*); one on Dec. 10th (RTK).
- S Addington Hills, a male singing in the last week of March (SJD, SPJ, GL). Ham Lands, one on Jan. 22nd (RBH). Kew Gardens, one on Feb. 8th (BM); a male on Apr. 5th and 6th (RBH). Wimbledon Common, two on Oct. 18th, one on the 19th (AGH). Inner London: Battersea Park, one on Feb. 5th (RBH).

1980 Additional Record

- H Darlands Lake, a female on Apr. 15th (ACW).

1982 Correction

- M The Queen Mary G.P. records refer to Nov. 20th not Nov. 30th.

413 Spotted Flycatcher

'A poor year' at Queen Mary G.P. was supported by 'a decline' at Dagnam Park and 'about half of last year's numbers' at Chiswick. But this does not appear to be the general picture. A very good breeding season was reported at Bromley. Elsewhere there were a number of reports of from one to nine pairs breeding, and at Hainault there were 14 pairs, at Alexandra Palace 12 territories and at Osterley Park 14 pairs. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, adults with juveniles seen at three localities in August. Regent's Park, one pair bred. Belgrave Square, one pair raised at least two young. Lansdown Square, one pair nested successfully.

416 Pied Flycatcher

Spring passage extended from Apr. 15th to 30th with an isolated record on May 18th; autumn passage was from Aug. 10th to Sept. 9th. The best year since the mid-1970s, with 20 birds seen in spring and an equal number in autumn. Males generally preceded the females in the spring.

- E Thorndon Park, a female on Apr. 19th and 21st (RBI). Wanstead Park, one on Apr. 21st (Dsk).
- H Hilfield Park Res., a male on Apr. 15th; one on Sept. 6th (CIB). Tykeswater Lake, a male on Apr. 19th and 20th (MG).
- M Alexandra Park, a female on Apr. 30th (NB). Hampstead Heath, a female on Apr. 17th; one on Aug. 11th and 13th (MN, KES). London Airport, a male found freshly dead below a window of Heathrow Police Station on Apr. 21st (TJD). Sipson, one on Sept. 5th (TJD). Willesden Green, a female on May 18th (SBI). Inner London: Belgrave Square, a male on Apr. 21st (Pct). Fulham Cemetery, one on Aug. 10th (NM). Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, two on Aug. 11th, three on Sept. 2nd (DAB).
- K Foots Cray Wood, a male on Apr. 24th (SJG). Orpington, a female at Darrick Wood on Apr. 29th (RJC). Ruxley G.P., two males on Apr. 21st (BB). St. Paul's Cray, one at Hoblingwell Wood on Aug. 14th (KHP).
- S Barn Elms Res., a male on Apr. 28th (NPS). Burgh Heath, two on Aug. 17th (Mrs A. Gurr *per* PJS). Claygate, one on Aug. 14th (Miss L. Collin *per* SDBWS). Headley Heath, one on Sept. 9th (CKD, POD). Holmethorpe S.P., a male on Apr. 20th (P. Booker *per* RWHS). Kew Gardens, a male on Apr. 19th and 20th, a female on Apr. 29th; one on Aug. 25th (TSC, RBH *et al.*). Mitcham Common, four, of which one caught and ringed, on Aug. 15th, three on Aug. 18th (MJC, MJN). Richmond Park, a male on Apr. 19th (*per* JHT). Richmond, two north of the lock on Apr. 21st (MLS). Sears Park, Cheam, a male on Apr. 17th (SWG).

417 Bearded Tit

- E Rainham Marsh, four on Jan. 2nd; four on Oct. 29th, 20 on Nov. 20th, five in December (PAB, MKD). Sewardstone, three in November and December (PR). West Thurrock, three on Jan. 23rd and 30th, two on Feb. 27th; ten on Dec. 21st (DRG).
- H Cheshunt G.P., two on Nov. 30th (LVPG). Rye Meads S.F., one on Oct. 22nd, four on Nov. 6th and 13th, two on Nov. 19th and four on Dec. 11th (RMRG). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one Oct. 22nd onwards, four from Nov. 6th to Dec. 31st (LVPG). Stocker's Lake, a female on Oct. 25th (HB).
- K Thamesmead, two males and two females on Nov. 22nd and a pair on Dec. 1st (PE, PJS).

1980 Additional Record

- M Brent Res., two females and a male from Dec. 7th to the end of the year (ACW).

1981 Correction

- M Brent Res., for the record Jan. 10th to Mar. 2nd substitute two females and a male which were present at the end of 1980 remained until March.

1982 Additional Record

- M Brent Res., one on Jan. 9th (DAW).

418 Long-tailed Tit

Although poorly reported from some areas and described as very scarce at Highbury, this species appears to be maintaining its numbers well. Breeding took place in three of the Inner London Royal Parks, and records elsewhere included 23 pairs on Wimbledon Common and 14 pairs at Panshanger. The largest number reported was 100+ in Epping Forest in November. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, one pair bred successfully near the Long Water; the largest number outside the breeding season was ten on Dec. 20th. Regent's Park, two pairs bred; 22 ringed during the period August to November. St. James's Park, one pair bred successfully.
S Battersea Park, four on Dec. 22nd.

419 Marsh Tit

Still insufficient information received to assess the status of this species, the only comparative figures available being for Hainault where the number of pairs has remained steady at 12 for the last three years, and Havering where there were two pairs compared with three in 1981 and 1982. The largest number reported was 30+ at Walton Heath on Oct. 11th. There were no Inner London records.

420 Willow Tit

Breeding season distribution is given. There were no Inner London records.

- E The numbers of pairs were: Berwick Ponds (1), Dagnam Park (3), Fishers Green (1), Hainault (4), Havering (2), Netherhall (1), Waltham Abbey (2).
H Borehamwood, a pair on May 5th. Broxbourne, a pair on Apr. 14th. Cheshunt G.P., one pair bred. Hampermill Lake, a pair on June 23rd. Hoddesdon, a pair on May 8th. Panshanger, two pairs on Apr. 4th. Stocker's Lake, three pairs bred. Tykeswater, one pair bred.
M Bentley Priory, a pair on Apr. 3rd. Brent Res., present. Mill Hill, one or two territories.
K Present at Joyden's Wood, Bexley, Chelsfield, Hayes Common, High Elms, Petts Wood, Hoblingwell Wood, St. Paul's Cray, Pratt's Bottom.
S Ashted Common, two singing on May 5th. Bookham Common, a pair on Apr. 10th. Devilsden Wood, Coulsdon, two on Apr. 9th. Epsom Common, 1+ on May 12th.

422 Coal Tit

Little information received. Bred in two of the Inner London parks. Three localities for which estimates of the breeding population were received were Chiswick c. 20 pairs, Osterley Park, nine territories and Wimbledon Common, 36 pairs. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred. St. James's Park, one pair bred. New River Walk, one most of the month of February. No information received for Regent's Park.
 S Battersea Park, two on Feb. 5th, one on Apr. 28th.

423 Blue Tit

The largest flock reported was 65 at Bookham Common on Oct. 9th. 96 were counted throughout Kew Gardens in December. Five pairs nested successfully in a one-acre garden at Hurst Green, three in nest boxes. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, several pairs bred. St. James's Park, bred. Aberdare Gardens, NW6, adults carrying food in May and June. Belgrave Square, one pair present. Russell Square, WC1, one seen entering a nest box on Apr. 27th. No information was received for Regent's Park.
 S Lambeth Palace Gardens, one in song on Apr. 29th. St. Thomas's Hospital, one to three on seven dates from Mar. 7th to Apr. 29th, including song twice.

424 Great Tit

Inner London records only are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred. St. James's Park, probably bred, a family party in the park on July 28th. Aberdare Gardens, NW6, one pair bred in a drain pipe. Belgrave Square, one pair present. Russell Square, WC1, one singing in February but not present in the breeding season. No information was received for Regent's Park.

425 Nuthatch

No evidence of a change of status. Inner London records are given.

- M Kensington Gardens, one pair feeding young in nest in June; another pair seen in June, but apparently did not breed. At other times the largest number seen was four on Dec. 12th and 27th. Regent's Park, probably bred; four ringed in September.

427 Treecreeper

The largest number of breeding pairs reported was 12 at Hainault. A pair which bred at Alexandra Park were the first there since 1978. 12+ were seen near the Sheen Gate of Richmond Park on Aug. 28th. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, one pair bred, adults and four juveniles seen near New Lodge on Aug. 2nd. At other times of the year sightings of single birds only. Regent's Park, two pairs possibly bred.

430 Golden Oriole

- E Dagnam Park, a male on June 5th (AG).
 M Bayhurst Wood, a male singing on May 21st; not seen but a sound recording made at the time was confirmed by R. H. Kettle (DL).
 S Dulwich, one heard singing at Peckarman's Wood on May 30th (EMN).

434 Great Grey Shrike

- E Fishers Green, one on Nov. 14th and Dec. 24th (TG,GJW) was the Cheshunt G.P. bird (see Herts. below). Sewardstone, one from January to March (JF *et al.*).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one from Jan. 1st to Feb. 13th (LVPG), the dates overlap with the Sewardstone record (about four miles away); one from Oct. 22nd to the end of the year (LVPG,HPM) was the same bird as seen at Fishers Green, Essex (see above). Croxley Moor, one on Mar. 19th (CKY,PAW) is presumed to be the Sandy Lodge bird. Rye Meads S.F., one caught and ringed on Mar. 26th (RMRG) may have been the Cheshunt G.P. bird. Sandy Lodge golf course, one almost daily from Feb. 23rd until Mar. 11th (APWH,ART *et al.*).
- K Chelsfield, one on Apr. 15th was said by a local farmer to have been present since November 1982 (RD).

1977 Additional Record

- M Kenwood, one on Dec. 4th (RW).

436 Jay

A movement into and through the Area began on Sept. 25th and continued well into October. Reports of small movements or increased numbers locally were received from 30 localities. Numbers were on a small scale compared with movements taking place at that time on the south coast and more particularly in the south-west. The largest passage noted was 24 in 1½ hours at Cheshunt G.P. on Sept. 25th. The largest concentrations noted were 50 at Hainault on Oct. 8th, 40 at Havering on Oct. 9th and 38 at Bromley Common on Oct. 30th. Inner London records are given. As in 1982 they included no breeding records.

- M Kensington Gardens, singles on June 5th and 9th; two on Oct. 25th and Nov. 11th, three on Dec. 12th. Green Park, one on Nov. 15th. No information received from Regent's Park. Bedford Square, one on Apr. 5th. New River Walk, one on Mar. 24th. St. James's Park, one on Apr. 27th and May 15th.
- S Waterloo station, one flew W on Oct. 21st.

437 Magpie

The increase of this species continues unchecked. Concentrations of 30 or more were noted at 11 localities, usually at winter roosts. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred. St. James's Park, one pair bred, ten on Oct. 17th was the maximum. No information received for Regent's Park. Bingfield Park, one on Jan. 16th. Islington Green School, one flew SW on Mar. 15th. New River Walk, one pair nested. Victoria Tower Gardens, three on Mar. 7th.
- S Battersea Park, nine on Feb. 5th, one on Dec. 22nd. Senegal Fields, Bermondsey, one on Apr. 19th. St. Thomas's Hospital, two on Dec. 6th, one on Dec. 14th.

440 Jackdaw

The largest concentration was 2,000 at Wraysbury G.P. refuse tip on Jan. 3rd. Elsewhere 400+ at a roost at Old Oxted on Jan. 30th was the maximum. Numbers feeding at a rubbish tip at Holmethorpe in January and February were c. 100. The only Inner London record, undated, was one flying ENE over Regent's Park.

441 Rook

Breeding records are given. There were no Inner London records.

- E North Ockendon, two small rookeries. Passingford Bridge to Ongar, 30 nests.
- H Garrett Wood, 20 nests on Apr. 14th. Rye Meads S.F., one pair attempted to breed.
- B Denham Place, 60 nests on Apr. 17th.
- S Godstone, 16 pairs in one rookery. Holmethorpe S.P., 30 nests at a new rookery. Southlands, Tandridge, 53 pairs in one rookery. Walton Downs, 42 occupied nests.

422a Carrion Crow

Large flocks are usually pre-roost gatherings, but a feeding flock on a rubbish tip at Holmethorpe S.P. totalled approximately 600 in January and February, and later in the year there were 500 on Aug. 7th. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred, several pairs with young in July and August. St. James's Park, one pair nested successfully. Regent's Park, 60 on Oct. 27th; no information received on the breeding season. Belgrave Square, one pair bred, raising two or three young. Islington, pairs bred at Canonbury Tower, Market Road Gardens and St. Mary's Church. Tower of London, a pair on May 16th.
- S Bermondsey, an occupied nest at Senegal Fields on Apr. 19th.

443 Raven

- B Wraysbury G.P., one on Mar. 13th (JAH, CJH).

The possibility that this was an escaped bird can not be ruled out. This is the 12th London Area record.

444 Starling

Autumn movements were noted on Oct. 30th when 1,000+ flew W in one flock between 08.30 hrs. and 09.00 hrs. at Woodmansterne, and 1,000 flew W in four hours at Mitcham Common. On Nov. 4th 2,000 flew W in three flocks between 07.35 and 07.56 hrs. at Woodmansterne and 250 also flew W at Crystal Palace Park. Other large numbers were usually associated with roosting, but there were 800+ feeding on an apple-dump at Stonehill Farm, Wilmington (K) in October, and smaller numbers in November and December. Bred as usual in the Inner London parks.

446 House Sparrow

The largest roost was 1,000 at Littlebrook G.P. on Nov. 7th. Bred as usual in the Inner London parks.

448 Tree Sparrow

At the beginning of the year there were 200 at Beddington S.F. on Jan. 23rd, Feb. 12th and Mar. 2nd, but elsewhere the only flock to reach 100 was at Bromley Common on Jan. 9th. At the end of the year flocks of 100 were seen at five localities. The only comments on breeding status all indicated a decline: 'breeding numbers down' at Bromley Common, 'none all year at Walton Res. where formerly common with a small breeding colony of five to ten pairs,' 'overall

decline at Walthamstow, Weald Park and the Roding valley.' The only Inner London records were for Regent's Park on Feb. 10th, Mar. 28th and Oct. 17th, but only for the last date was the number seen, three, given.

451 Chaffinch

In the period from the beginning of the year up to Mar. 6th flocks of from 100-200 were noted at seven localities. From Oct. 30th up to the end of the year flocks of 100-160 were seen at three localities, numbers at this time being lower than in 1982. The autumn passage was on a very small scale. Although noted at 11 localities on nine dates in the period from Oct. 20th to Nov. 4th, the total of birds involved was only some 450. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred. No information received for Regent's Park.
- S County Hall, Westminster, 39 flew W on Oct. 20th, 18 flew WNW on Oct. 21st and 20 flew W on Oct. 27th.

452 Brambling

At the beginning of the year reported from 19 localities. Most records were of under ten, the highest being 30-40 at Goddington Park, Orpington, from February to Apr. 7th. The last seen was one at Petts Wood on Apr. 24th. First arrival in the autumn was one flying W over Regent's Park on Oct. 6th – 15 days before the next sighting which was of two at Wraysbury G.P. on Oct. 21st. Although widespread with reports from 34 localities numbers were again low, the maximum being 50 at Rye Meads S.F. on Dec. 17th which was double the next highest total. Numbers were normally under ten.

455 Greenfinch

The pattern of the large concentrations was very different to that of 1982. There were 300+ at Serge Hill (H) on Jan. 27th. Thereafter numbers only reached 100 at Bexley Woods on Feb. 6th and Darenth in March and April. After the breeding season numbers again reached 100 at Abbots Langley on Aug. 3rd. Then on Sept. 25th there were 500 with Linnets on the overgrown drained north basin of Staines Res. and 150 at Beddington S.F. on Sept. 30th. In October numbers at North Ockendon rose to 300 on the 9th, 500 on the 16th and 800 on the 22nd. Thereafter the maxima were lower, but there were still 200 at Staines Res. on Nov. 6th and on the same day 120 at Dartford Marsh. On Nov. 9th numbers at Osterley had built up to 100 and maintained that level until the end of the year. On the same day, Nov. 9th, there were 100 at Beddington S.F. Numbers reached 100 at two other localities in December. Breeding season records for Inner London are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, bred. No information received for Regent's Park. Present in the breeding season at Shadwell, E1. Laburnum Street, E2. Haggerstone Park, E8. Victoria Park, E8. Shap Street, E2, up to four at the end of June and early July included juveniles.

456 Goldfinch

No flocks in the early part of the year exceeded 30. The build-up of large concentrations after the breeding season was well-marked, with

120 at Rainham on Aug. 21st, 100+ at Beddington S.F. on Sept. 11th, 200+ at Epsom and Walton Downs on Sept. 13th, 150 at Rainham on Sept. 15th, 100 at Queen Mary G.P. on Oct. 1st, 200 at Dartford Marsh on Oct. 2nd, and 300 at Rainham on Oct. 8th and 23rd. After the end of October dispersal had taken place and no flock exceeded 80 in November and December. Inner London breeding season records are given.

- M Regent's Park, bred. No breeding season records for the other Royal Parks. Tavistock Square, WC1, one singing on Apr. 15th and 28th and May 11th. King Edward Memorial Park, Shadwell, E1, two pairs with young on May 16th. Islington, a pair in Frederica Street on Apr. 24th. Belsize Road, NW6, six on May 29th, three in song; one in song and a second sometimes present on July 7th, 8th and 28th. Fairfax Road, NW6, one in song on May 19th. Woolneigh Street, SW6, two pairs bred successfully.

457 Siskin

Numbers were low at the beginning of the year. Reported at 36 localities at only five of which did numbers reach the range 25-50 and at one, Bushy Park, there was an exceptional concentration of 100 on Jan. 16th. The last seen was one feeding at a peanut-bag in a garden at Lower Kingswood on Apr. 24th. The first arrival in the autumn was noted at Alexandra Park on Oct. 5th. Although a little commoner than earlier in the year numbers were still low. Reported from 53 localities with parties in the range 25-60 at 12 of these and one larger concentration of 100 at Cassiobury Park on Dec. 27th. The only Inner London records were of one flying S at Kensington Gardens on Oct. 7th and ten in Regent's Park on Oct. 19th.

458 Linnet

In January there were concentrations of 260 at Symondshyde (H) on the 15th and 250 at Beddington S.F. on the 23rd and numbers exceeded 100 at two other localities. The maximum in February and March was 180 on Feb. 5th at Beddington S.F., but the largest concentration for the first part of the year was 300+ on Apr. 17th at Harlington (M). After the breeding season the largest numbers in July and August were in the range 100-150. By Sept. 29th there were 500 at the overgrown north basin of Staines Res. In October numbers reached a peak with 200 at Berwick Ponds on the 2nd, 500 again at Staines Res. on the 7th, 200 at Thamesmead on the 19th, 200 still at Staines Res. on the 21st, 300 at Stanstead Abbots on the 23rd and 100 at four other localities. In November and December there were 200 at Rainham and 100-130 at Bromley Common, and two other flocks of 200 were seen, at Woodmansterne on Dec. 13th and at Osterley Park on Dec. 29th. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park, two on Apr. 25th; seven flying S on Oct. 5th and two flying S on Oct. 7th. King Edward Memorial Park, Shadwell, E1, a pair on May 16th.

459 Twite

Smaller numbers than usual.

- E Rainham Marsh, noted on nine dates from Jan. 2nd to Mar. 19th, maximum ten on Jan. 2nd and 22nd (LB,MKD,RW); present again

from Oct. 29th to the end of the year, maximum five in December (MKD).

460 Redpoll

For what they are worth, the number of pairs or territories reported were: Essex 26, Herts. two, Middx. eight, Bucks. none, Kent none, Surrey 11, a total of 47 compared with 58 in 1982. It is doubtful if these figures are in any way representative of the breeding season distribution. For example 20+ pairs were reported in Epping Forest in 1982, yet apparently there were none in 1983. Again, the total of 11 for Surrey included nine for Wimbledon Common and two only for the rest of the county. All breeding season distribution records would be very welcome. Flocks outside the breeding season were on a modest scale with none reaching 100 at the beginning of the year. There were three flocks of 100 in September and October and one of 200 on Dec. 30th, the largest concentration of the year, at Waltham Abbey. Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, one on Apr. 25th, three on Apr. 29th, one flying W on May 6th, one on May 9th; one on Oct. 19th. Kensal Green Cemetery, one on Mar. 2nd. St. James's Park, one on May 6th.

463 Crossbill

- H Panshanger, five on Dec. 27th (SBS). Moor Lane, Rickmansworth, one heard on Sept. 14th, and a male, a female and two immatures on Sept. 16th (JNG).

469 Bullfinch

Inner London records are given.

- M Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, at least one pair but no evidence of breeding.

470 Hawfinch

- E Dagnam Park, a pair in May; ten on June 5th (AG). Epping Forest, one on Apr. 26th, four in November (AJG,BSM). Hainault Forest, five pairs probably bred (MKD). Harlow Woods, a pair March to May, one in August (TW). Harold Hill, three in March and April (JMH). Thorndon Park, three on Nov. 20th and two on Dec. 10th (RL).
- H Amwell G.P., regular January to May, max. 12 on Apr. 4th; regular November and December, max. five on Dec. 12th (LVPG). Broxbourne Woods, two on Mar. 6th, ten on June 20th (AHD,RAH,GJW). Cassiobury Park, a male on Jan. 10th (MAH,RMH). Colney Heath S.P., one on Dec. 4th (HNHS). Hatfield, two on Nov. 20th, one on Dec. 5th (HNHS). Hertford Heath, a pair on May 8th (TJ). Hoddesdon Park Wood, one on May 8th (TJ). Northaw Great Wood, a pair on Apr. 22nd, six on Apr. 28th, at least two pairs in June (CD). Panshanger, one on Feb. 28th, two pairs on Apr. 4th (PDW). Rye House Marsh, two on Mar. 26th and one flying over Rye Meads S.F. the same day (RMRG,GJW). Whippendell Woods, five on Mar. 20th, a male on Apr. 9th, a male and female on Apr. 16th, 23rd, and 30th, and on May 3rd, four on May 6th and two on May 8th, one feeding two juveniles on June 18th (mo). Wormley Wood, two on Apr. 29th, a pair on May 10th, four on May 13th (TJ,GJW).

- M Bentley Priory, one in February, four on May 2nd and one on May 19th (HHS,PAW).
 K Chislehurst, three or four at Scadbury Park on Dec. 30th (BB). High Elms, three on Jan. 8th, one on Mar. 6th (RTK). Lullingstone, three or four on Apr. 3rd (SJG). Orpington, at Darrick Wood, one on Apr. 15th, two on May 15th (RJC).
 S Coulsdon, a male on Apr. 6th, and at least five at Coulsdon Court golf course on Apr. 13th (SJA,BN). Kew Gardens, a pair on Apr. 11th were soon disturbed and flew off (BM). Oxshott Heath, an adult on Apr. 3rd (CRAG). Park Down, one on Nov. 6th (LR).

493 Lapland Bunting

- S Beddington S.F., a male on Oct. 29th and Nov. 7th (PSAA,SJA).
 The 12th record for the London Area, but the sixth in the last eight years; although conceivably two birds may have been involved.

494 Snow Bunting

- E Rainham Marsh, two on Feb. 14th and one on Mar. 3rd (MKD,JMH).

496 Yellowhammer

The only concentration of 100 reported was at Dagnam Park in November. Singles in Regent's Park on Oct. 6th and Nov. 15th were the only Inner London records.

506 Reed Bunting

Numbers of 50 or more were seen only at Rainham Marsh from Nov. 27th to the end of the year, the largest numbers being 110 on Dec. 10th and 130 on Dec. 30th. Three pairs at Surrey Docks on June 2nd was the only Inner London record.

510 Corn Bunting

The breeding season distribution is given. For Essex this was provided by MKD and JMH and compares well with previous years. For the rest of the area although there are a number of winter records for both ends of the year little is recorded after April. It should be borne in mind that this is a late breeder. Perhaps the potential nesting areas are unattractive to bird watchers at the appropriate time of the year. The largest numbers at roosts were 100 at Rainham on Feb. 10th and 110 there on Dec. 10th.

- E Singing males at Aveley (1), Berwick Ponds (10), Corbets Tey (10), Hainault/Havering (10-14), Ockendon (3), and Rainham Marsh (5).
 H Batchworth, one singing in June.
 M Osterley Park, one singing on June 13th but no evidence of breeding. Queen Mary G.P., two singing males in summer.
 K Eynesford, one on June 18th.

1980 Additional Record

- M Near Edgware, two singing in June.

Appendix 1

The following records relate to birds of captive origins.

49 Bean Goose

H Rye Meads S.F., one flying W on May 9th is considered to have been an escaped bird (AH).

50 Pink-footed Goose

K Sevenoaks G.P., one from Sept. 7th to 22nd is thought to have been of captive origin (JTr).

51 White-fronted Goose

H Stocker's Lake, an adult in January had been present since February 1981 (ART).

54 Snow Goose

E Nazeing G.P., a blue-phase bird on Jan. 22nd (RL).

H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Feb. 13th (RL).

S Gatton Park, two blue-phase birds on Oct. 6th (MKg). Holmethorpe S.P., two on Jan. 16th, one on Aug. 14th, two on Sept. 25th, Oct. 2nd and Nov. 13th (RWHS.JDF *et al.*).

56 Barnacle Goose

Records north of the River Thames were mostly of single birds, but south of the River Thames parties of up to seven or eight were seen at Gatton Park and Holmethorpe S.P.

59 Egyptian Goose

No breeding reports were received, although one bird remained throughout the year at Fishers Green G.P. Apart from this all observations occurred in April and September, suggesting that seasonal movements may take place to and from breeding areas in East Anglia where the species is well established.

60 Ruddy Shelduck

Up to ten free-flying birds were present in a collection at Clissold Park (M) all year. Close-by, at Stoke Newington Res., a pair bred.

62 Wood Duck

All records received relate to birds of captive origin. Unlike the Mandarin, the feral population of Wood Duck is not yet self-sustaining and the species is still awaiting admission to the British list.

H St. Albans, a male on Dec. 12th. Verulamium Lake, one on Dec. 18th (JHT).

M A free-flying pair was present in a collection at Clissold Park and single males were recorded at Brent Res. and Stoke Newington Res. (LAB.TG).

72 Pintail

S Carshalton Ponds, an escape present from February to August (NHM).

123 Peregrine

E Berwick Ponds, a male falconer's bird wearing jesses on Jan. 29th (MKD).

In addition to the above-mentioned ducks and geese, the following escaped species were also noted in the London Area during 1983 (full details are retained on the Society's record cards).

Sacred Ibis

Black Swan

Bar-headed Goose

South African Shelduck

Chiloe Wigeon

Chestnut Teal

Bahama Pintail

Cinnamon Teal

Grey Parrot

Blossom-headed Parakeet

Blue and Yellow Macaw

Canary

Black-headed Weaver

Rammey Marsh Sewage Works – A Short Account

G. J. White

Rammey Marsh was 'discovered' by the author in June 1980, and was subsequently visited on over 100 dates between June 1980 and March 1983. The majority of visits took place between June 1981 and September 1982. However between August 1982 and March 1983 the area of greatest interest was suddenly, and completely, destroyed. This paper documents the birdlife of the site, and evaluates its importance in the context of the Lea Valley. The highly transient nature of many similar areas in the London Area, and the speed with which they can be destroyed should alert readers to be ever more vigilant to protect all natural and man-made habitats within our boundaries.

THE HABITAT

Rammey Marsh Sewage Works is situated to the northeast of Enfield Lock, and lies between the London to Hertford railway line and the River Lea. It is an open site which consists of a mixture of large drying beds and modern concrete settling tanks on one side and disused settling lagoons on the other side; there is also a small lake towards the southern end of the site. There were four settling lagoons, although only two were wet, and it was these that proved to be of greatest attraction to birds and which were later destroyed. Each lagoon was approximately 0.4 hectare (1 acre) in area, and was bordered by low banks which were covered in rough vegetation, the dominant plants being stinging nettle, thistles and hemlock.

The two wet lagoons contained one to three feet of water during the winter, but this dried during each summer to produce a muddy margin. Prominent plants on the wet lagoons were several varieties of dock, and celery-leaved buttercup. The dry lagoons were 'crusted-over' and covered in rank vegetation with willowherbs predominating, although there were several clumps of elder and bramble. In addition several species of dragonfly occurred including many Black-lined Orthetrum on the lagoons and Red-eyed Damselfly on the lake. Butterflies were also numerous, and included Essex Skipper.

BIRDS OF RAMMEY MARSH

The following list is a summary of the more notable sightings or records; 'bird/days' are used to illustrate the total number of birds seen on all visits.

Little Grebe: Two pairs bred regularly on the lagoons.

Shelduck: Recorded on eight dates totalling 17 bird/days, mainly during the spring. This is above-average for a Lea Valley site.

Teal: Passage was noted from July onwards with a peak of 47 on Aug. 30th 1980. It was the most numerous duck during the winter and the lagoons provided a secluded feeding site, principally for birds from Wm. Girling Res. Generally about 100 were present in the winter (20 to 25% of the Lea Valley population), but the peak was 350 on Feb. 9th and 14th 1982.

Mallard: Up to ten broods annually, with up to 60 birds during the winter.

Shoveler: Occurred mainly on autumn passage from June to September, when it was frequently more numerous than at any other Lea Valley site. The peak count was 70 on Aug. 19th and 21st 1981. Up to 20 were present during the winter months.

Little Ringed Plover: One pair bred in 1982. Passage birds were recorded on 22 dates totalling 61 bird/days.

- Ringed Plover:** Passage birds were noted on eight dates totalling 17 bird/days.
- Lapwing:** One or two pairs bred annually. The peak count was 180 on Aug. 10th 1981.
- Little Stint:** Two on Sept. 19th 1981.
- Dunlin:** Passage birds were seen on 13 dates totalling 20 bird/days.
- Ruff:** Passage birds were present on 36 dates totalling 60 bird/days, all between July and September. The peak was five on Sept. 8th 1980. During the period of the study there were only 14 other records in the Lea Valley.
- Snipe:** Single birds were present during two summers, the only such records in the Lea Valley at this time. Passage began in July and birds were present all winter with peaks of 35 on Mar. 12th 1981, 50 on Mar. 9th 1982 and 72 on Mar. 12th 1983.
- Black-tailed Godwit:** An adult from Aug. 9th to 11th 1981.
- Whimbrel and Curlew:** These two species were only recorded flying overhead.
- Redshank:** One pair bred in 1981, however the site was important as a feeding area for other birds breeding elsewhere in the Lea Valley. Birds breeding locally have subsequently declined, and indeed there were no birds breeding anywhere in the Lea Valley in 1983; it seems more than a coincidence that this should have happened consequent upon the demise of the best lagoons at Rammey Marsh.
- Greenshank:** One on June 1st 1982. Noted on passage on 36 dates from July to September, totalling 95 bird/days with peaks of seven on July 14th 1981 and five on Aug. 8th 1980 and July 25th 1982. Only one other site in the Lea Valley was superior during the study.
- Green Sandpiper:** This species was more numerous here than at all other Lea Valley sites put together. It was recorded on 68 dates totalling 765 bird/days, with peaks of 27 on Aug. 8th 1980, 18 on Aug. 3rd 1980 and 19 on July 31st 1982. One or two birds wintered regularly. It was the most numerous passage wader at the site.
- Wood Sandpiper:** Passage birds were seen on 16 dates totalling 28 bird/days, with peaks of four on Aug. 3rd and 4th 1982 and three on Sept. 11th 1982. This species was considered to be rare locally until this site was discovered.
- Common Sandpiper:** Occasional in spring but much commoner in autumn, birds were seen on 57 dates totalling 506 bird/days. The peak counts were 31 on July 31st 1980, and 20 on July 28th 1981 and on Aug. 2nd 1982.
- Turnstone:** One on July 26th 1982.
- Little Gull:** Singles were seen from Sept. 8th to 25th 1980, on May 7th 1981 and Apr. 20th 1982.
- Short-eared Owl:** One in February 1981.
- Swift:** 200 were over the lagoons on July 27th 1980 and 400 on July 28th 1981.
- Sand Martin:** 50 were over the lagoons on Aug. 19th 1981.
- House Martin:** 100 were over the lagoons on Aug. 9th 1981.
- Meadow Pipit:** A passage bird and winter visitor. The peak count was 100 on Sept. 29th 1981.
- Water Pipit:** One on Jan. 9th 1983.
- White Wagtail:** One on Apr. 1st 1981.
- Black Redstart:** Two on Mar. 15th and one on May 7th 1981.
- Whinchat:** One or two on passage, but an exceptional peak of 26 was noted on Sept. 2nd 1981.
- Wheatear:** Recorded on eight dates totalling 17 bird/days.
- Warblers:** Few bred, but the lagoon banks held birds on passage. 15 Whitethroat were present on Aug. 11th 1982 and ten Sedge Warblers were counted on Aug. 20th 1982.

VALUE OF THE SITE IN A LEA VALLEY CONTEXT

- (a) As an autumn passage wader site Rammey Marsh was unrivalled in the Lea Valley during the study period. The lagoons often seemed to be covered in birds; the most significant species were Shoveler, Ruff, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper and Wood Sandpiper.
- (b) As a breeding site it attracted three species of wader and possibly a fourth. Redshank, Lapwing and Snipe have all decreased sharply locally in recent years.
- (c) As a wintering site it attracted significant numbers of Teal.
- (d) Perhaps the major importance of this small site was its relationship to other sites in the Lea Valley. Teal regularly flew in from Wm. Girling Res. – a roosting site – to feed, and Redshank from other areas also used it as a feeding site. Clearly the inter-relationship of different sites needs to be borne in mind when any particular site is threatened by development.

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To Ian Dearing, Clive Cottrell and Sid Batty for additional records. To the works personnel for their interest and to the Thames Water Authority for allowing access to the site, particularly the site manager. In addition I would like to thank K. A. Roberts for providing helpful comments on a draft of this account.

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A New Guide to the Birds of Essex. By Simon Cox. Essex Bird Watching and Preservation Society, Ipswich, 1984. 290 pages; 19 black-and-white photographs; many line drawings. £12.50.

In the half century since the last major work on the birds of Essex – W. E. Glegg's (1929) *A History of the Birds of Essex* – both the number of active bird watchers and consequently the number of records have grown considerably. In 1949 the Essex Bird Watching and Preservation Society was formed and the Essex Bird Report has been published annually since then. An interim update of Glegg's county history was made in 1968 with the publication of *A Guide to the Birds of Essex*, but it was rapidly made to seem outdated by the publication of *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Britain and Ireland* (1976), and the continued upsurge of surveys and censuses during the 1970s.

Now at last all this material has been collated into one book, a long-awaited volume which neatly fits into the jigsaw pattern of county bird books around London. With over 270 pages crammed full of valuable information this is a book to be dipped into whenever straying over the River Lea into Essex. The bulk of the book is made up of a fully-researched systematic list, enhanced by excellent vignettes which add considerably to the charm and layout of the book. Here the reader is given an in-depth assessment of the breeding, winter and passage status of each species in Essex, plus a comprehensive summary of the rare vagrants. A welcome addition to the breeding data has been the inclusion of Common Bird Census results from Essex and S.E. England giving a far more complete analysis of the fortunes of many commoner species. Good use has also been made of the results obtained from the national atlas as well as our own *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the London Area* (1977) so that even without an atlas of the birds of Essex a full picture emerges of the status of most breeding species.

Also included in the systematic list are detailed surveys undertaken by the Birds of Estuaries enquiry and the results of many ringing projects throughout the county; this helps to give a thorough account of each of the 336 species recorded in the county.

Introductory chapters are also very informative and include an enlightening resume of the ornithological history of Essex together with a detailed survey of habitats and conservation measures being undertaken to protect them, by one of the 'senior' Essex birdmen – G. A. Pyman. A selection of evocative habitat photographs nicely complement the text at this point; these chapters, in addition to the arrival and departure appendix, give an effective balance to the systematic list.

Thus we have in this new guide not only a readable volume but also a mine of valuable information; whilst Essex cannot boast a list as long-as-your-arm, or host a key of migration watch-points, it certainly has a uniqueness all its own. It is exactly this that Simon Cox has captured in this value-for-money book, and a huge debt is owed to him for his expert scholarship in editing this fine addition to our bookshelves. Much credit must also go to the Essex Bird Watching and Preservation Society for having the foresight to persevere with this project.

MIKE DENNIS

Birds of Bentley Priory, Stanmore, Middlesex

C. R. Kightley and P. A. Whittington

INTRODUCTION

Situated just to the northwest of Stanmore village, on the northern side of the London Borough of Harrow, Bentley Priory is important as a good example of the type of habitat typical of north London prior to the spread of suburbia. For this reason, it was notified by the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

This paper gives an account of the birdlife of Bentley Priory for which, as far as we know, little information was previously available. Our study covers the period 1971-1983, documenting where possible changes in bird populations and habitat. In 1976, details of the area were submitted to the British Trust for Ornithology for their Register of Ornithological Sites.

This paper is based principally on our own field-work and personal observations, augmented where possible by those of other bird watchers, to whom we are particularly grateful and whose names appear within the acknowledgements section.

STUDY AREA

The study area corresponds almost exactly with that designated by the NCC as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and is officially known as Bentley Priory Open Space. Covering approximately 69 hectares (170 acres), it lies between 76 metres (250 feet) and 137 metres (450 feet) above sea-level, and has a gently sloping southerly aspect giving good views across the London Basin. The area is bounded to the north by RAF Bentley Priory; to the east by a privately-owned deer enclosure and Stanmore village; to the south by the A410 (Uxbridge Road) and Lower Priory Farm and to the west by large residential properties with substantial private gardens.

The study area can be divided into a number of different habitats, which are best illustrated by reference to the accompanying map, (Fig. 1).

Access throughout is on foot only; there are a number of designated footpaths, but the general public is free to roam at will over most of the area.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 1170 A.D. to 1970 A.D.

The following is a brief historical summary of Bentley Priory based on information primarily extracted from files held at the London Borough of Harrow's Civic Centre Library in Wealdstone, Middlesex.

The original priory was founded in 1170. It passed into the hands of King Henry VIII in 1543, and there followed a succession of private ownerships until 1776, when the buildings were demolished. The priory was then rebuilt — although some distance away from the original site — and the estate purchased by the Marquis of Abercorn, who greatly extended it to cover an area of 100 hectares (250 acres).

In 1882, the property was purchased by a hotelier, Frederick Gordon, and between 1885 and 1908 it functioned as a hotel, although this was not a commercial success. In 1908, it was sold again and served as a girls school until 1924; it passed into the hands of the Air Ministry in 1925, and subsequently became the headquarters of RAF Fighter Command. The RAF still possess the house to this day.

HABITAT SURVEY AND VEGETATION

The present day appearance of Bentley Priory owes much to the extensive landscaping and planting carried out during the creation of Lord Abercorn's country estate. Then, a variety of trees and shrubs were introduced, notably cedar and rhododendron, and many still remain — particularly around the Lake and within the grounds of what is now RAF Bentley Priory.

A detailed map showing the vegetation of the area was compiled in 1971 by CRK, updated in August 1974 (CRK), and again in 1983 (CRK,PAW). The summary below is based on the map, and changes that have occurred during the course of the study period are detailed in the following section.

The higher northern part of the priory has a well-drained acidic soil type, and this is reflected in the vegetation, which shows many heathland characteristics. Typical plants are silver birch, gorse, harebell, and wavy hair-grass.

By contrast, the lower southern part of the priory is poorly drained. The vegetation is largely damp meadow and typical plants include meadow buttercup and lady's smock.

The western part of the area — referred to in Fig. 1 as 'the Heath' — occupies almost one-third of the total study area and consists of rough pasture with scrub. Hawthorn, bramble and dog rose are predominant, and increasing.

The woodland is mixed, with hornbeam, ash and pedunculate oak being dominant, although elm was probably the most numerous species until 1975/76 when it was decimated by Dutch Elm disease. Alders occur in the damper areas by the streams, and around the Lake and Boot Pond. Ground vegetation throughout the woodland is mostly sparse.

The vegetation of the Lake Wood is relatively diverse, and species include ash, yew, sweet chestnut, London plane, horse chestnut, holly, sycamore, cedar and rhododendron. By contrast, Heriot's Wood is more uniform and consists predominantly of hornbeam. There are a number of silver birch at the northern end of the wood, and shrubs include holly and blackthorn. The latter occurs chiefly at the edges of the wood in dense and impenetrable hedgerows.

The grassy strip that separates the Lake Wood and Heriot's Wood has several small clumps of trees, and a number of small enclosures containing pines and other conifers. These were established in the late 1960s; the largest plantation is about 80 metres square and is situated on the eastern side of the priory, just south of the deer enclosure.

The Lake, which is completely surrounded by woodland, forms the centrepiece of Bentley Priory and covers approximately 2.2 hectares (about 5 acres) of open but shallow water. There is a small marshy delta at the northern end, and the banks are mostly overhung with rhododendron and alder. The Lake is fed by streams rising immediately to the north and west and, prior to the construction of a new drainage channel in 1979, the level of water was maintained by a sluice situated in the eastern corner. In addition, there is some seepage of water through the east bank. This converges with water from the outlet of the Lake to form a single stream which exits at the south end of Bentley Priory, eventually to form the Silk Stream that flows into the Brent Reservoir (Welsh Harp) at Hendon.

The only other body of water within the study area is the Boot Pond, so called after its shape, and which lies at the extreme southeast corner of the priory. Though covering 0.8 hectares (about 2 acres), it is largely choked by emergent vegetation — sallow, great reedmace and yellow iris. There is now little open water.

The whole of Bentley Priory Open Space is grazed by a small herd of about 50 cattle.

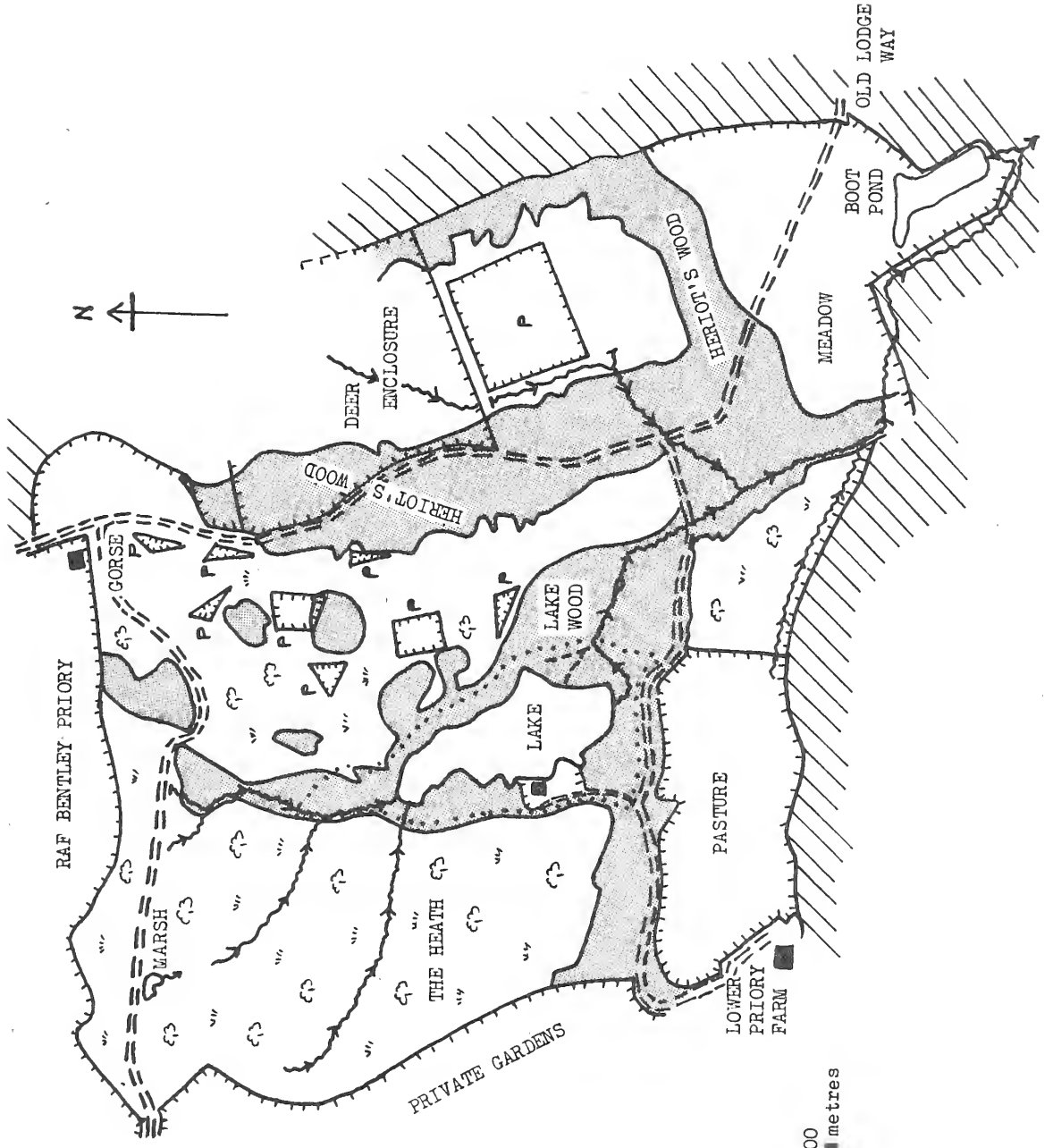
(*Opposite*) Fig. 1. Map of Bentley Priory showing the main habitat features.

MAP OF BENTLEY PRIORY STUDY AREA

KEY

- == Main footpaths
- ▨ Woodland
- Fences
- Nature Reserve boundary
- /// Residential area
- P Plantation
- ☼☼☼ Rough pasture with scattered trees etc
- ~ Stream and direction

SCALE



CHANGES TO THE STUDY AREA, 1971 to 1983

There have been a number of changes to the study area since 1971, of which the most noticeable has been the impact of Dutch Elm disease. In August 1975, CRK noted that 'a minority of elms have been killed so far by the disease'. However, during the long hot summer of 1976 the elm population was decimated by the disease, and widespread felling of dead and diseased timber commenced in the autumn. Until then elm had been the dominant species of tree and the loss of so many trees greatly changed the visual appearance of the priory. This was perhaps largely responsible for the decline of a number of birds, notably the three resident woodpeckers. Presently, much of the elm is regenerating, with some young trees now up to six to ten feet in height.

The removal of dead and diseased timber has created areas of 'open' woodland, allowing the understorey and ground vegetation to develop. Brambles and nettles have been the chief beneficiaries. More 'open' woodland was created in 1979 when a new dam, sluice and drainage channel were installed at the southeast corner of the Lake. Some trees and rhododendrons were removed in the process and nettles, pendulous sedge and various grasses have quickly colonised to form a now lush ground cover.

Throughout the period there has been further habitat loss through clearance and fire. Areas of gorse have been lost almost annually through burning, but particularly in the spring of 1977 and this is reflected in the sharp decline in the Linnet population. Scrub (e.g. rose, bramble and hawthorn) has been cleared from some areas upon the recommendation of the NCC, who were concerned that encroachment of open areas by woodland was occurring and should be kept in check (London Borough of Harrow, pers. comm.). The decline of some breeding birds such as Garden Warbler and Yellowhammer could be linked with this.

In 1982, lawns within the grounds of RAF Bentley Priory were dug up as work began on World War II bunkers situated beneath them. Prior to this, the lawns were a favoured feeding area for several species including Green Woodpecker, Pied Wagtail, Whinchat, Wheatear, Mistle Thrush, Tree Sparrow and Linnet.

In 1974, the Lake and part of the surrounding woodland was declared a local nature reserve for the Herts. and Middx. Trust for Nature Conservation Ltd. Reserve notices were posted, and a barbed-wire fence erected to mark the boundary and reduce trespass but, unfortunately, there has recently been a marked increase in public disturbance to the reserve.

During the winter of 1975/76, we sited 38 nestboxes, of varying sizes and designs, within the reserve. Funded in part by a small grant from the Young Ornithologist's Club at Sandy, Bedfordshire, this project was most successful, although many of the original boxes have now been replaced by the Harrow NHS.

In 1975, the Harrow NHS cleared much emergent vegetation from Boot Pond in an attempt to create more open water, but the pond is now once again choked.

Wire fencing surrounding the plantations has now been removed as the trees are well-grown and, as they mature, a few species may benefit.

During the period there appears to have been a slight decrease in the size of the priory's grazing herd but, unfortunately, the same is not true of the number of people using the area. Moxey (1968) stated that, 'the public do use the Priory but, on the whole, tend to keep to well-defined routes', and that there was a 'small amount of public pressure over the area as a whole'. In 1971, we too estimated public usage of the area to be 'light', but the past decade or so has seen a dramatic increase and, in addition to this, more people now stray from the well-defined routes than before.

BIRDS OF BENTLEY PRIORY

Bentley Priory has long been known for its diversity of birds; Moxey (1968) recorded a total of 61 species, of which 43 were breeding (see Table 1). More recently, we have recorded as many as 90 species annually.

The status of all species (including birds flying over) that occurred at Bentley Priory during the course of our study is summarized as fully as possible in the systematic list.

With regard to those species listed by Moxey as 'occasional', only three — Bewick's Swan, Mandarin and Great Grey Shrike — have not been re-recorded during the study period. In addition, two species — Long-eared Owl and Red-backed Shrike — that are not included in Moxey's lists, are known to have occurred at Bentley Priory in the past, but neither has been reliably recorded during the study period.

BREEDING BIRDS

Our study began in 1971, by which time Little Grebe and probably also Marsh Tit, had ceased to breed at Bentley Priory. However, 11 new species were found to be breeding that were not included in Moxey's list, although most of these may have been present at the time but overlooked.

Table 1. Birds of Bentley Priory: Breeding Species.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Estimated No. of Breeding Pairs in 1983</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>Estimated No. of Breeding Pairs in 1983</i>
* Little Grebe	—	Chiffchaff	5-7
Mallard	2+	Willow Warbler	c. 15
Kestrel	1	† Goldcrest	c. 5
Moorhen	2-3	Spotted Flycatcher	1
Coot	2	Long-tailed Tit	3-5
† Feral Pigeon	—	* Marsh Tit	—
† Stock Dove	c. 8	Willow Tit	1
Woodpigeon	c. 20	Coal Tit	8+
† Collared Dove	c. 8	Blue Tit	c. 50
Cuckoo	1	Great Tit	c. 30
Tawny Owl	1+	Nuthatch	c. 10
Green Woodpecker	1+	Treecreeper	c. 3
Great Spotted Woodpecker	c. 2	Jay	c. 7-10
† Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1	Magpie	c. 15
† Swallow	1	Carrion Crow	c. 4-6
† Grey Wagtail	—	Starling	20+
Pied Wagtail	1	House Sparrow	2-3
Wren	c. 40	† Tree Sparrow	—
Dunnock	20-30	Chaffinch	c. 10
Robin	c. 30	Greenfinch	c. 10-15
Blackbird	50+	Goldfinch	1
Song Thrush	c. 20	Linnet	3
Mistle Thrush	5-7	Redpoll	—
Lesser Whitethroat	c. 4	Bullfinch	5-10
† Whitethroat	—	† Hawfinch	c. 2
† Garden Warbler	c. 2	Yellowhammer	1-2
Blackcap	5-7	Reed Bunting	1

(Total: 54 species)

Notes: The above figures are an estimate of the number of singing males/pairs/territories present or held during the 1983 breeding season, based on 28 visits made to the study area between March and July. A total of 47 species probably bred in 1983; in addition, in 1983 House Martin bred within 20 metres of the periphery of the study area (Old Lodge Way).

* denotes species recorded as 'resident and breeding' by Moxey (1968), but not seen during the study period.

† bred at least once during the study period, but not recorded by Moxey (1968).

METHODS

In most years, between 30 and 60 visits were made to the study area. The duration of each visit varied from a minimum of 1½ hours to a maximum of 8 hours, averaging between 3 and 4 hours.

A Common Bird Census using BTO methods was carried out over most of the area during 1971 and 1972. In subsequent years the numbers of singing males and other evidence of breeding were recorded, and form the basis of our estimates of the breeding population. This effort was intensified in 1983, with 28 visits made during the breeding season (March to July), and Table 1 summarizes the estimated breeding population for all species in that year. (We hope that this may be of use in future studies).

Other field-work has included studies of Long-tailed Tits (between 1971 and 1973), and Willow Warblers (1971-72). We have made occasional winter roost counts of thrushes, finches and Magpies (see systematic list), and produced species accounts to summarize the years 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1977 and 1978. Nestboxes were periodically checked during the breeding seasons of 1976, 1977 and 1978. (Since 1981, the nestbox project has been monitored by the Harrow NHS).

SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR THE STUDY PERIOD, 1971 to 1983

We have endeavoured to summarize the status of each species that occurred during the study period by use of the following codes:

Resident	(R)	
Summer Visitor	(S)	
Winter Visitor	(W)	
Passage Migrant	(PM)	regular spring/autumn migrant.
Rare Visitor	(RV)	fewer than five records.
Occasional Visitor	(O)	uncommon visitor, irregular in occurrence.
Frequent Visitor	(F)	common visitor, regular in occurrence.
Breeds	(B)	breeding has occurred annually throughout the study period.
Has Bred	(b)	has bred, or probably bred, at some-time during the period but not in every year.
Formerly Bred	(*)	has bred in the past, but not during the study period.

Of the 111 species recorded during the study period, 40 are classified as residents, 11 as regular summer visitors, and four as regular winter visitors. Four occur as passage migrants, 13 as frequent visitors, 12 as occasional visitors, and 27 as rare visitors. 44 species probably bred annually throughout the period, with a further eight species breeding or attempting to breed at least once.

Little Grebe (O*) Formerly a breeding resident (Moxey 1968) but had ceased to breed by at least 1971. All recent records are of single birds, except for a pair present and 'whinnying' between Apr. 8th and 18th 1977.

Great Crested Grebe (RV) Two records. Two flying N on July 31st 1973 and an adult on the Lake on Feb. 21st and 22nd 1975.

Cormorant (RV) Two records. Two flying NE on Dec. 12th 1976. One flying NE on Apr. 21st 1979.

Grey Heron (F) Recorded in all months of the year. Usually single birds, but occasionally two; maximum was three on July 20th 1983.

Mute Swan (RV) One record. An immature on the Lake on Apr. 12th 1982, later seen flying off W.

Grey Goose sp. (RV) One record. Two flying SE on Sept. 10th 1973 were almost certainly Greylag Geese.

Canada Goose (O) Brief spring visits to the Lake by single birds or pairs in 1976, 1978, 1981 and 1982. A pair was present in spring 1983, and four birds on Mar. 29th. The maximum of five flew over on Mar. 2nd 1980.

Teal (RV) Two records. 18 flying N on Feb. 15th 1975, and a female on the Lake on Sept. 9th 1979.

Mallard (RB) Two to four pairs breed, though with limited success. Numbers have decreased since the mid-1970s due perhaps in part to the infilling of nearby Clamp Hill Pond, and increased public disturbance. Maximum numbers usually occur from December to January with peak counts of 56 on Dec. 6th 1976, and 47 in late December 1973. No other counts have exceeded 33 birds.

Pintail (RV) One record. A drake present on the Lake from at least May 4th to June 29th 1975.

Pochard (O) Until the mid-1970s, a regular visitor in winter and spring, but now very scarce. Most records are of single birds or pairs but 11 were seen on the Lake on Oct. 30th 1973, and five on Feb. 24th 1974. This and the following species are thought to have declined as a result of increased disturbance around the Lake.

Tufted Duck (F) Recorded in all months but becoming less frequent since the mid-1970s. Not known to have bred, but up to ten birds were regular, with peak counts of 26 on Oct. 30th 1973, 16 on Sept. 19th 1976, and 15 on Oct. 30th 1976.

Sparrowhawk (O) A scarce but increasing visitor, in keeping with the general recovery throughout London and the country as a whole. All records were of single birds except for two on Jan. 12th 1982, and again on Apr. 21st 1983.

Buzzard (RV) One record. One flying over on Apr. 5th 1972 (N. Rowe).

Osprey (RV) One record. A single bird circling high on Oct. 23rd 1977 (*LBR* No. 42).

Kestrel (RB) One pair breeds annually.

Hobby (RV) Three records. Singles on Aug. 26th 1976, Sept. 23rd 1978, and July 2nd 1983.

Grey Partridge (RV) One record. A single bird flushed from the heath on Nov. 4th 1972.

Pheasant (RV) Three records. Single birds on Feb. 10th 1972, Mar. 12th 1972, and May 31st 1974.

Water Rail (RV) Two records. Single birds on Feb. 17th and 18th 1973, and on Mar. 27th and 28th 1976.

Moorhen (RB) Has declined from five pairs at the beginning of the study period to three pairs by 1983, perhaps due to the depletion of waterside vegetation. Breeding success is invariably low. Maximum winter count was 13 birds at the Lake on Jan. 22nd 1977.

Coot (RB) Formerly two pairs on the Lake and one pair on Boot Pond, but only single pairs were at each locality in 1983. A maximum of eight adults was present on Apr. 12th 1982.

Lapwing (F) Frequently seen overhead, with most records referring to either post-breeding or hard-weather movements. Largest flock was of 44 flying W on June 14th 1974.

Snipe (O) Probably annual until 1976 since when there have been few further records. The maximum count was four on Dec. 23rd 1974.

Woodcock (RV) Four records. All of single birds, on Sept. 16th 1973, Mar. 30th 1974, 'end of March' 1975, and Nov. 26th 1977.

Curlew (RV) One record. Three flying NW on July 22nd 1973.

Redshank (RV) One record. Four birds on Feb. 5th 1972 (N. Rowe).

Common Sandpiper (RV) One record. Three at the Lake on Apr. 14th 1975.

Black-headed Gull (F) Recorded in all months but chiefly in the winter, when large numbers pass over the priory en-route to the gull roost at Hilfield Park

Reservoir. Prior to the mid-1970s, up to 50 birds were regular in winter at the Lake but numbers have dropped in recent years to only ten or so.

Common Gull (F) Most often recorded in the winter, with a maximum of 27+ flying over on Mar. 23rd 1975.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (F) Often seen overhead, especially in late summer, with many records of more than 50 birds. Maximum recorded is 100+ flying SE on Sept. 19th 1975.

Herring Gull (F) Has been recorded in all months but, unlike the Lesser Black-backed Gull, peak numbers occur in the winter months. The maximum recorded is 150+ flying N on Mar. 23rd 1975.

Great Black-backed Gull (O) Scarce overhead, mainly in autumn and winter. The maximum was 12, on July 31st 1973.

Common Tern (RV) A party of 12 flying NW on July 30th 1973. A party of 16 birds flying NW on July 28th 1973 was also considered to be of this species.

Feral Pigeon (Fb) About 12 pairs are thought to have bred in the Priory's clock tower until this was destroyed by fire in 1979. No other suitable sites exist, but the clock tower has now been restored and so the species may return in due course. (Feral Pigeons have also declined elsewhere locally during the past decade).

Stock Dove (RB) A difficult species to census, but we estimate that currently a minimum of four pairs breed within the study area, with another four or so pairs just outside. Local birds are often faithful to particular nest-trees.

Woodpigeon (RB) Probably in the region of 20 pairs breed. Largest numbers occur during October and November, with birds moving predominantly to the SW. The maximum recorded is 4,085 passing over in under four hours on Oct. 31st 1976.

Collared Dove (Rb) Only stragglers were seen up to 1971, and it probably did not establish itself as a regular breeding bird here until after the mid-1970s. The present population is estimated to be about eight pairs, all but one of which breed just outside the study area.

Turtle Dove (O) Recorded annually. Unlikely to have bred but may have done so in 1974 and 1979, when there were several records during the breeding season.

Cuckoo (SB) Until 1975, up to four were regular but numbers have since declined to one or two birds only. Recently fledged young have been seen on two occasions, both fostered by Dunnocks. A brown-phase adult was recorded in May 1972 and May 1973.

Tawny Owl (RB) Probably two or three pairs. A juvenile was seen by the Lake on Aug. 25th 1976. A variety of interesting species has been noted mobbing local Tawny Owls, including Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch, Tree Sparrow, Greenfinch and Siskin.

Swift (S) Frequently overhead throughout the summer. May have bred in the past.

Kingfisher (O) All records refer to single birds at the Lake or Boot Pond, the majority occurring between late August and the end of October.

Wryneck (RV) One record. A single bird near the Deer enclosure on Sept. 16th 1978.

Green Woodpecker (RB) Originally three to five pairs bred but this has declined to one pair, or possibly two, by 1983. Possible reasons for their decline may include the felling of dead and dying timber following Dutch Elm disease, and increased public disturbance of favoured grassy feeding areas.

Great Spotted Woodpecker (RB) Probably four or five pairs bred in the early 1970s but now no more than two pairs breed. Being essentially arboreal by nature, this species seems less susceptible to disturbance than the Green

Woodpecker and thus the felling of timber may be the chief reason for its decline.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (RB) Two to three pairs bred annually throughout the 1970s but currently only a single pair is present. According to the London Bird Report (1977), many areas reported exceptionally high numbers of breeding season records 'due to the effect of Dutch Elm disease...creating suitable habitat for breeding,' but there was no corresponding increase at Bentley Priory.

Skylark (F) The majority of records relate to October and November, with a maximum of 72+ moving S on Oct. 10th 1976.

Sand Martin (O) Probably an annual migrant in very small numbers. Only one spring record, a single bird on Apr. 28th 1975. Maximum of four on Sept. 22nd 1980.

Swallow (SB) Formerly two or three pairs but now only a single pair, breeding at Lower Priory Farm.

House Martin (S) Birds from colonies in roads adjacent to the priory commonly feed overhead and up to 100 are regular during August and September. Maximum number recorded is 150+ on Aug. 28th 1979.

Tree Pipit (PM) Breeding was not proved within the study area, but a singing male was present near the deer enclosure throughout June 1972. A family party of five on the RAF lawns on Sept. 1st 1971 had probably come from nearby Stanmore Common, where a few pairs breed. Highest spring count is five, on Apr. 23rd 1978.

Meadow Pipit (F) Most records relate to small numbers (one to 15) flying over, chiefly in late autumn and early spring. Maximum number is 45 seen on Apr. 3rd 1975. Unusual were c. 30 feeding on the RAF lawns on Mar. 30th 1978.

Yellow Wagtail (RV) Three records. A male on Aug. 24th and 25th 1972, one on Sept. 23rd 1973, and one flying over on Apr. 27th 1974.

Grey Wagtail (Fb) Up to two birds often present in the winter, but irregular at other times of the year. Breeding was strongly suspected in 1973, when the male of a pair was seen carrying food, although no nest or young were found. One pair bred in 1982 (*per LBR* No. 47).

Pied Wagtail (RB) A pair breeds annually within the grounds of RAF Bentley Priory, formerly feeding predominantly on the lawned areas, but the birds now feed chiefly at nearby Stanmore Cricket Club ground. A second pair may occasionally breed at Lower Priory Farm, where a party of ten on Sept. 25th 1976 is the maximum recorded.

Wren (RB) About 40 pairs breed.

Duncock (RB) Between 20 and 30 territories. (See also Cuckoo).

Robin (RB) In the region of 30 pairs breed.

Black Redstart (O) Six records only. A male on Sept. 2nd 1973, and single females on Oct. 17th 1976, Apr. 23rd 1978 and May 6th 1978, Apr. 13th 1980, and Aug. 24th 1980.

Redstart (O) Scarce autumn migrant, with seven records only. The maximum is two, present from Sept. 2nd to Sept. 4th 1973.

Whinchat (PM) Perhaps annual. All records relate to single birds. The highest annual total is four in 1975. Unusual was a juvenile on the early date of July 15th 1979.

Wheatear (PM) Annual in spring and autumn, but sightings are likely to become less frequent as a result of the loss of the RAF lawns. The highest annual total is of five birds in 1973.

Ring Ouzel (RV) Two records. A male from Apr. 27th to 29th 1973, and a male on Apr. 22nd 1977.

Blackbird (RB) Probably the most abundant breeding species, with in excess of 50 pairs.

- Fieldfare** (W) Regular in winter, favouring the hawthorns on the heath. Largest winter roosts were 500 on Jan. 1st 1979, and 350+ on Feb. 1st 1975.
- Song Thrush** (RB) About 20 pairs breed. The maximum count was of 50+ on the heath on Sept. 30th 1973.
- Redwing** (W) At least 100 are regular throughout the winter, with a maximum of 500 on Jan. 1st 1979.
- Mistle Thrush** (RB) Between five and seven pairs, of which two or three usually breed on the periphery of the study area. The largest party recorded is 16 on Sept. 10th 1973.
- Grasshopper Warbler** (RV) Two records. A singing male was present from at least Apr. 25th to May 5th 1974, and another on May 7th 1980.
- Sedge Warbler** (RV) Three records. One in sub-song on Aug. 8th 1971, one singing on May 29th 1973, and one on Aug. 23rd 1975.
- Reed Warbler** (RV) One record. One singing at the Lake on June 9th 1973 (N. Rowe).
- Lesser Whitethroat** (SB) The population fluctuates from year-to-year, with between one and four pairs present. A maximum of five singing males was recorded on May 19th 1983.
- Whitethroat** (Sb) Up to 1974, two or three pairs were regular but has since ceased to breed annually and has been absent in some years (e.g. in 1977 and 1983).
- Garden Warbler** (Sb) Prior to 1977 five or six pairs were regular but since 1977 annual totals have fluctuated between zero (e.g. in 1978 and 1979) and two pairs (e.g. in 1983) only. We feel that the loss of suitable breeding habitat through fire, clearance and maturation is responsible for its decline.
- Blackcap** (SB) Decreased in the mid-1970s from an estimated maximum of nine pairs at the beginning of the period, but has since increased again to about six pairs in 1983. Peak numbers are usually recorded in May and September. There are no winter records.
- Chiffchaff** (SB) After dwindling to three to five pairs in the mid-1970s, the population has now recovered to its pre-1975 level of about seven pairs. Two singing on Mar. 12th 1977 were exceptionally early.
- Willow Warbler** (SB) In the region of 20 pairs breed, with most located on the heath, but numbers have declined in recent years to about 15 pairs in 1983.
- Goldcrest** (RB) About five pairs breed within the study area, but this species seems to favour the many ornamental conifers to be found in adjoining gardens. Breeding numbers within the study area may increase as the small areas of planted conifers mature. Highest numbers are noted during autumn and winter, and a notable influx occurred during mid-October 1980.
- Firecrest** (RV) Two records. Between two and four birds were present on the heath on Apr. 18th 1971, and a female in Heriot's Wood on March 31st 1975.
- Spotted Flycatcher** (SB) Up to three pairs breed. The largest number recorded was 15 on Sept. 10th 1973.
- Pied Flycatcher** (PM) Probably an annual visitor, chiefly in autumn. Only two spring records; single males on May 3rd 1976, and Apr. 21st 1983. The maximum number recorded is four on Aug. 26th 1976.
- Long-tailed Tit** (RB) The population of three to five pairs appears to have remained stable throughout the period.
- Marsh Tit** (O*) No evidence of successful breeding during the study period, but formerly bred (Moxey 1968). Extremely scarce throughout Stanmore, where it is easily outnumbered by the Willow Tit.
- Willow Tit** (RB) Has declined from about three pairs to its present level of one pair. A nest found in 1983 was excavated in a holly stump.
- Coal Tit** (RB) A minimum of eight pairs breed. This species may increase in the future as conifers planted in the late 1960s reach maturity.

Blue Tit (RB) Probably over 50 pairs, many in the nature reserve using nestboxes (e.g. 13 nests in 1976).

Great Tit (RB) About 30 breeding pairs, some using nestboxes within the nature reserve (e.g. four nests in 1976).

Nuthatch (RB) About 10 pairs, including up to three pairs using nestboxes in the nature reserve.

Treecreeper (RB) Easily overlooked due to its unobtrusive nature, but may have declined slightly as a result of felling after Dutch Elm disease. A minimum of three pairs has been present during recent years.

Jay (RB) A stable population of seven to ten pairs is present in the study area.

Magpie (RB) In the region of 15 pairs breed. Throughout the winter the dense hawthorns on the heath are used as a roost, with up to 70 birds present. The earliest recorded date for nest-building is Feb. 18th 1973. (Magpies have increased noticeably throughout the Harrow area since the early 1970s).

Jackdaw (F) All records relate to single birds or a pair, flying over during the spring and autumn, except for a single bird on June 5th 1983, and four flying E on Mar. 27th 1976.

Rook (O) All records relate to single birds or pairs flying over, chiefly in March and October. Exceptional were 21 flying W on Feb. 17th 1973, and five on Oct. 31st 1976.

Carrion Crow (RB) Probably four to six pairs breed, but several nest just outside the periphery and as many as 15 individuals may be present in the study area at any one time. Largest flocks recorded are 38 flying NE at dusk on May 15th 1978, 38 flying E on May 9th 1979, and a minimum of 32 in a single tree on Apr. 15th 1983.

Starling (RB) Over 20 pairs breed, some using nestboxes in the nature reserve. Large numbers occur in late summer, when family parties feed throughout the area. The peak winter count is 220+ at Boot Pond on Feb. 15th 1975. Passage is often evident in late October and early November, with the largest single flock recorded totalling 330+, on Oct. 31st 1976. An all-white individual was first seen in early April 1976, and remained until at least Aug. 6th 1976; it was seen again on two dates in spring 1977.

House Sparrow (RB) Common resident in surrounding residential areas, but currently only two or three pairs breed within the study area. Several hundred birds roost on the heath in winter, and up to 1,000 were present in 1973.

Tree Sparrow (Rb) Breeding occurred in every year except for 1983. Usually, one to three pairs but five bred in 1977 and 1978 (including three pairs in nestboxes). The loss of elms, the destruction of the RAF lawns, and the felling of a 'traditional' nest-tree on the heath (October 1980) could be factors contributing to their decline.

Chaffinch (RB) About ten pairs breed. It is most numerous in winter, when it forms mixed feeding flocks with Greenfinches and the occasional Hawfinch and Brambling. The winter population is generally about 50 birds.

Brambling (WO) Probably annual in very small numbers, but perhaps overlooked in mixed finch flocks. The maximum recorded are four during March 1972, and up to nine flying N on Oct. 12th 1975. A singing male in breeding plumage was present on Apr. 22nd 1976.

Greenfinch (RB) It is very difficult to be sure of exact breeding numbers as parties of up to 30 are present throughout the summer. Between ten and 15 pairs seems a reasonable estimate, with others in nearby gardens. Up to 100 birds are regular in winter, feeding mainly beneath the hornbeams in Heriot's Wood, and roosting in hawthorns on the heath.

Goldfinch (Rb) A scarce resident, with one or two pairs possibly breeding. However, most are recorded in late summer and early autumn, although

numbers have fallen dramatically in recent years. The peak autumn count is 150+ on Sept. 10th 1973. Small flocks occur in winter in the alders, often with Redpolls and Siskins. The maximum winter count is 35 on Dec. 28th 1982. **Siskin** (W) Winter visitor in varying numbers, found chiefly in the alders. The largest numbers occurred during the early 1970s and 1980s, for example: 60+ on Dec. 7th 1973, up to 70 on Nov. 15th 1981, and 125+ on Dec. 26th 1981. In other years only ten to 20 were present, with none being seen between February 1975 and October 1977. Males are occasionally heard in song during March and April.

Linnet (RB) At the beginning of the study period, a breeding colony was present — mainly in the gorse area — and a winter roost became established here in 1974/75, increasing from 150+ in early January to peak at 300+ on Apr. 1st 1975. The number of breeding pairs also increased at this time, from a former total of about ten pairs, to between 15 and 20 pairs. However, the destruction of much of the gorse during 1977 reduced the 1978 breeding population to about eight to ten pairs, and the decline has continued with subsequent habitat loss to only three pairs in 1983. In 1983, only one pair nested in the gorse, and two pairs bred at the south end of Heriot's Wood where brambles have grown up in the place of felled elms. Linnets are now generally absent in winter, leaving by early October and returning in early April.

Redpoll (Fb) Mainly recorded in winter, but a pair may have bred in some years. A juvenile seen on July 1st 1975, and four on July 7th 1978, may have come from Stanmore or Harrow Weald Commons where the species breeds regularly. The largest flock was of 50+ on Apr. 25th 1974.

Bullfinch (RB) Between five and ten pairs breed, and up to 30 are present in winter, especially amongst the hawthorns on the heath. The largest winter flock is 12 on Dec. 22nd 1981.

Hawfinch (RB) Although first recorded on Jan. 22nd 1972, this quiet and wary resident was almost certainly previously overlooked. Never more than three pairs present during the breeding season, although at least eight birds were present in March 1972.

Yellowhammer (RB) Although a maximum of six singing males was present in 1972, the breeding population averaged between three and five pairs during the early 1970s. The population declined in 1976/77, since when only one or two pairs have bred each year. The largest numbers recorded outside the breeding season are 10+ on Dec. 3rd 1978, and up to ten at the Lake on Apr. 3rd 1983.

Reed Bunting (RB) One pair breeds every year at the Marsh. A second pair has sometimes been present at Boot Pond (e.g. in 1974), or in dry habitat at the pine plantation adjacent to the deer enclosure (as in 1976). The Lake lacks really suitable habitat, and a juvenile seen here on June 13th 1976 had probably come from the marsh or deer enclosure. The highest winter count is of four at Boot Pond on Feb. 15th 1971.

SUMMARY

This paper gives an account of the birdlife of Bentley Priory, Stanmore, Middlesex, chiefly for the period 1971-1983. The status of the 111 species recorded during the study period is discussed and summarized by means of a systematic list. A brief historical account of the area is also included, together with a description of the habitat and vegetation, and the way in which this has changed.

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A number of people have provided us with records and given valuable assistance in the field. In particular, we wish to thank G. Berti, M. Cox, G.

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The Occurrence of Pelagic Seabirds in the London Area

A. V. Moon



INTRODUCTION

The species under review in this paper are those seabirds that spend the majority of their lives far out to sea, only returning to land during the breeding season. There are one or two exceptions (such as Shag which is almost exclusively a coastal bird rarely straying far from shore throughout the year), but I felt that these exceptions neatly fitted into the broad pattern of occurrences of true pelagic species and have included them for this reason. Whilst some of these species are true vagrants in the London Area others pass through annually in varying numbers; their records are discussed and analysed in an attempt to discover the reasons for their appearance, if possible their origins and in some cases their final destination.

The recording area for the LNHS — a radius of 20 miles from St. Paul's Cathedral — is totally landlocked. Admittedly the River Thames flows right across the Area and is actually tidal as far up as Teddington Lock, but even on the extreme eastern fringe it is less than one mile wide and at least 30 to 40 miles from the open sea.

Our Area does better than many other equivalent inland regions and there are three main reasons for this: a) the large number of bird watchers in the most densely populated region in Britain, b) the abundance of artificial waters, and c) the proximity of a major river estuary to our boundaries. There is little doubt that the Thames estuary, especially during northerly gales, acts rather as a massive duck decoy — the prominence of the north Kent coast (e.g. Sheppey and Allhallows) as a sea-watching point is proof of this; although most birds turn back some clearly keep going.

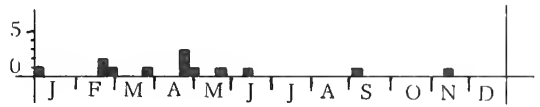
There are several reasons why seabirds arrive inland. These are: a) small numbers of some species (e.g. Arctic Skua and Kittiwake) choose to migrate overland, b) the majority of birds are simply stormblown, c) some are sick and d) others are disorientated (or a combination of the last three). Whilst it is often difficult to explain individual examples of vagrancy, the reasons for 'wrecks' are fairly well known; all seabirds are well adapted to the oceanic life and will not be displaced simply by strong winds. A combination of factors is necessary. These include poor feeding conditions (or an actual shortage of food), persistent gale force winds which may have driven birds for hundreds of miles and prevented them from feeding, unseasonal or very cold weather and lastly sickness (not all these are necessary to cause a 'wreck'). Most seabirds can easily ride out storms at sea and they only become vulnerable if they then have to fly to find food.

Species are treated in systematic order, and it can be assumed that all records refer to the London Area unless otherwise specified. The histograms, which have been placed alongside the species' accounts, are composed of individual records of each species (i.e. individual arrivals) and do not reflect the length of stay of any birds which would only distort the patterns for the peak time of vagrancy. Sightings of more than one bird

(where they are known to have arrived together) are only included as one record since this would also introduce distortions. Each histogram is based on seven-day periods throughout the year, as explained by Sharrock (1977), to eliminate any effects of week-end observer bias.

Fulmar

Fulmarus glacialis



It is easily forgotten that prior to 1878 this species was non-existent as a British breeding bird (apart from on St Kilda), but by 1969/70 they had increased to around 300,000 pairs — a spectacular upsurge. In eastern England 123 pairs in 1929 had risen to 1,690 pairs in 1969/70.

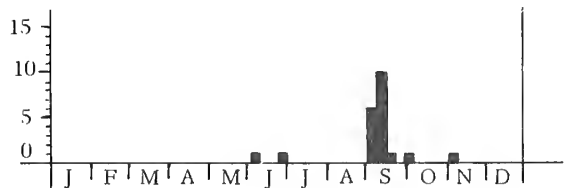
There were no records in London until September 1954, and then no more until two sightings coincided with a major ‘wreck’ in February and March 1962; since then there have been a further 11 records all but one of which were between January and June. Fisher (1952) analysed inland records and found the peak months to be from September to November with a lesser peak from January to March. The histogram provides a strong contrast to this and interestingly even more so to the West Midlands where the majority of records have been in June (Harrison 1982).

The ‘wreck’ in 1962 and the influx in 1981 were both due to strong and cold northeasterlies, and involved birds whose immediate origins were in the North Sea, and most of London’s birds may well have similar origins. The Fulmar is largely absent from its breeding colonies from August to October when birds disperse out to sea to moult; and it is conspicuously absent from the large seabird movements off the Kent coast at the same time (Taylor 1981), which probably explains its rarity in London in the autumn. The peak passage along the east coast is from March to early May (Wallace 1981) which would seem to correspond with many of our records.

Out of the 14 sightings up to 1983, four were found dead or dying and three others appeared distinctly unwell; clearly at least some of our records involve weakened birds. Inland records in mid-summer are more puzzling, but often seem to be associated with violent thunderstorms.

Manx Shearwater

Puffinus puffinus



Of all the species under review this has by far the narrowest spectrum of dates; out of 23 birds that had occurred up to 1983, 17 arrived between 3rd and 16th September (a peak well shown in the histogram), with remaining singles in June, July, September, October and November with one undated. It seems likely that there must be a clear-cut reason for this consistent and precise timing — the most logical one is that most juveniles leave their nests in the first half of September and this is being reflected in the London Area records.

A little explanation is required to justify this. There have been two ringing recoveries in our Area and in both cases these involved juveniles ringed only days before in their S.W. Wales breeding colonies. There have been many identical ringing recoveries in other inland counties (e.g. Buckinghamshire, Derbyshire, the West Midlands and Wiltshire) of birds ringed in their S.W. Wales burrows only days before their appearance inland. The origins of many of London’s birds probably lie in these colonies which together collect

over 100,000 pairs (between one-third and one-half of the entire British population.)

Because of the high risk of predation from gulls, shearwaters prefer dark moonless nights for their arrival and departure, and if it is windy as well then the chances for a quick and clear take-off are greatly increased — especially if the burrow is some distance from the sea (Lockley 1942). So it is perhaps not surprising that many young birds are destined to depart in windy conditions; consequently if this happens to be during the passage of an intense Atlantic depression whipping up gale or storm-force winds then the birds stand a far greater chance of becoming disorientated and driven inland powerless against the force of the wind.

It is worth noting that there is a noticeable peak off Kent coasts in September, and although Manx Shearwaters are still scarce in Kent — only 210 recorded between 1952-76 (Taylor 1981), — it is possible that some of our birds might approach from the east.

Interestingly 50% of all records have involved birds either seen, or picked up, at non-aquatic localities, and it seems that they are most at risk from landing on the ground from which they would be unable to take-off again unaided. It seems improbable that this species could find suitable feeding conditions inland although one bird stayed for three days in 1977 and another for two days in 1983 — both at reservoirs.

Little Shearwater

Puffinus assimilis

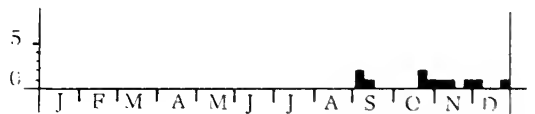
This isolated occurrence (August 12th 1912, found dead at Welling in Kent) is surely as inexplicable as it is exceptional. At best very rare off British coasts in autumnal movements, it is virtually unknown inland; the date of this record is too early to involve a bird of the year and can consequently be presumed to be an adult. It is worth remembering that this species can travel up to 15 km inland to reach its chosen nesting burrows, so it may not be a complete stranger to overland flight. It is a cosmopolitan species whose nearest breeding colonies are the volcanic islands of Cape Verde and the Canaries.

Storm Petrel

Hydrobates pelagicus

There have only been 11 sightings of this species in London, eight occurred between 1950 and 1966 and the remaining three in 1983; although much scarcer than Leach's Petrel, it is a much commoner breeding bird. The majority of young do not leave the nest until late September or October and most then head fairly rapidly south to their wintering areas off the African coast (Cramp 1977).

All sightings have been in the period from September to December and this coincides with the peak off the north Kent coast in the middle two weeks of October (Taylor 1981) and high counts at St Ives, Cornwall, during gales in October and November (Penhallurick 1969). There is a slight easterly bias to the records, although to what extent this reflects their origins is difficult to say; sightings from October onwards are more likely to involve juveniles. The two 1983 records followed a ferocious Atlantic storm that 'wrecked' many Leach's Petrels, and like that species they probably approached from the southwest.



Leach's Petrel

Oceanodroma leucorhoa



This is a much rarer breeding bird in Britain than the Storm Petrel; but as with the latter species few young leave the nest before late September, with the majority departing in October. Leach's however, in contrast to Storm, actually linger in the North Atlantic building up in the latitudes of their breeding colonies on both sides of the Atlantic, peaking during September and October in the west and during October and November in the east; only stragglers remain after November. It is quite probable that American birds move over to the European side thus augmenting the population before they all move south; certainly the large 'wreck' in 1952 involved too many birds for the European population alone to have been involved (Boyd 1954).

There have been 52 records up to 1983 (outnumbering Storm by 5:1), and since this species is present in large numbers in the North Atlantic it is logical to assume that it is more likely to be caught up in severe late autumn storms. Leach's are thought to be particularly susceptible to displacement in winds above their normal flight speed of 19 knots (Boyd 1954) and in both 1952 and 1983 birds were forced inland because violent and persistent depressions had prevented a large number of birds from feeding, driving them eastwards until eventually they reached the coast. Whilst most of the birds in 1952 were emaciated juveniles the 1983 'wreck', by contrast, involved adults and the mortality rate appears to have been low.

64% of all sightings were in the west and in fact 35% of all records were at just two reservoirs (Staines and Queen Mary); 72% of records were in September and November. With a westerly bias of this kind it seems likely that a high proportion of our birds arrive from the west or southwest; wind directions at the time of recent arrivals have all been from this quarter, the one notable exception being the spring individual in 1981 which arrived following northeasterly gales. However many sightings have occurred at times of light winds suggesting that by no means all are storm-driven; apart from 1952 only a minority have been picked up dead.

Leach's is relatively scarce in the North Sea, although it is now seen annually off north Kent coasts, and possibly some of our birds follow the River Thames in from the east during northerly gales. The histogram shows a clear double-peak in early September and early November, which reflects the 'wrecks' of 1952 and 1983 (involving seven and eight records respectively). Since the young do not fly until at least late September records prior to this will only involve adults, or birds at least one year old.

Gannet

Sula bassana



77% of the world population of Gannets (213,000 pairs) breed in the Western Palearctic, although this total had quadrupled since the turn of the century; recent increases in the east coast colonies (e.g. Bempton and Bass Rock) may be of relevance to London's sightings. Juveniles head south as soon as they leave the nest, eventually crossing the Equator and generally not returning to their natal areas for several years. Adults leave the colonies from September onwards and although many remain in British waters some undertake long migrations down the Atlantic coast of Africa: the Gannet is not a bird of deep water and remains confined to the relatively shallow continental shelves (Nelson 1978).

Up to 1983 there had been 41 birds in our Area with a fairly even scattering

throughout the year, the two best months were April with 11 records (although only one up to 1981) and September with five. Only a small proportion of those birds published have been aged but of those that were, adults have predominated, and only six were aged as immature.

The Gannet is frequent off Kent coasts and shows a large peak between mid-September and November with a smaller peak in April and May: counts of several hundred have been made in the Thames estuary following northerly gales in autumn (Taylor 1981). That there have not been more London records, especially on the Thames, may well show how resistant this species is to inland vagrancy; sickness could well be the explanation for inland records. The fact that 23% of birds were found dead or dying tends to confirm this; in addition a further 26% were picked up and subsequently released — and whose ultimate fate is not known — so potentially 50% of all sightings could have been sick individuals. As with the Manx Shearwater it is probably most at risk from landing on a non-aquatic surface and then finding itself unable to take-off again.

Many birds have arrived at times of only light winds, although by contrast at least ten birds that were seen in late April and early May 1981 were forced inland by strong northeasterly winds allied with unseasonal blizzards and poor visibility; most birds seen inland during this influx appear to have been centred on the Wash (Nightingale 1982). It is possible that most birds arrive in our Area from the east and a slight southwesterly bias to the records in the autumn may be merely coincidental; however records are too scattered (dates and places) to make any firm conclusions concerning the origins of London's birds.

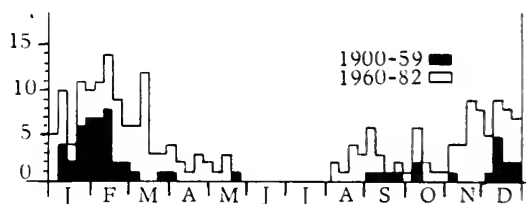
Shag

Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Approximately 30,000 pairs of Shag nest in Britain and Ireland (80% in Scotland), although only 2,000 pairs nest on the east coast (again most in Scotland). There have been six ringing recoveries in the London Area, three birds were ringed on the Farne Islands (1953, 1966 and 1974), two birds on the Isle of May (both in 1965) and one on the Bass Rock (1936); this strongly suggests that London birds originate from these the southernmost of the east coast colonies. Movements of Shags are at best dispersive, with first-winter birds moving the greatest distance. They never stray far out to sea and the general direction of dispersion is south along the east coast, with very few ranging beyond the Straits of Dover. The North Sea seems to act as an effective barrier to prevent Norwegian birds from reaching our shores.

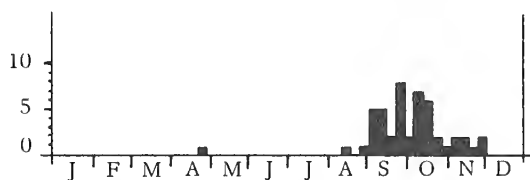
Up to the 1930s there had only been three records in London (one in 1909 and two in 1926), but during the 1930s they began to be reported more frequently, increasing during the 1940s and 1950s (44 between 1945 and 1959), reaching their peak in the 1960s (145 between 1960 and 1969) and then tailing off slightly in the 1970s (88 between 1970 and 1979). An interesting parallel can be drawn here with the growth of the colonies on the Isle of May and the Farne Islands. Up to 1931 no more than two pairs nested at either site, by the late 1960s, however, these had risen to 880 and 362 pairs respectively; although an outbreak of shellfish poisoning in 1968 reduced the population on the Farne Islands to only 60 pairs.

Shags seem particularly susceptible to 'wrecks' and several have reached our Area, most notably: 13 in February 1935, 20 in January and February 1958, 56 in March 1962, 23 in November 1965 and 16 in November 1974



(totals are the number of birds seen). Strong northeasterly gales were responsible for the 1935 and 1962 influxes and in the latter year were associated with very cold weather. Of those birds that were aged the great majority have been immatures, and indeed the two largest flocks of 19 and 15 — at Walthamstow Reservoirs in 1962 and 1965 respectively — were composed entirely of immatures. Since first-year birds are perhaps more likely to be displaced away from the sea in adverse conditions, and because they move further away from their breeding colonies than the adults, it is not surprising that they are recorded more frequently in London.

Regrettably many birds perish; at least 57 are known to have died out of an approximate total of 343 up to 1981, and it seems that many birds are too ill on arrival to recover. Virtually all our birds can be assumed to come from the North Sea with some arriving overland but presumably the majority following the River Thames into London (where 23% of all records have been). Several interesting points emerge from the histogram: firstly February proves to be by far the best month in the first period (1900-59) but just falls behind November in the second period (1960-82). Secondly there was a notable increase in autumn records between 1960 and 1982, especially during November when records rose from one (1900-59) to 18 (1960-82). Thirdly the noticeable March peak (74% of all March's records were in 1962) and lastly the tendency for birds to appear earlier in the autumn during the second period.



Grey Phalarope

Phalaropus fulicarius

The Grey Phalarope is a strictly pelagic species, always migrating at sea and avoiding all land-masses until finally it turns inland to its chosen breeding area. It is a frequent migrant off the western seaboard of Britain, particularly so in the southwest; its wintering grounds are mainly off the West African coast where large numbers are known to gather. They are largely absent from the North Atlantic in the British latitudes from November onwards.

This species is more exclusively a stormblown vagrant than almost any other species under review, and 'wrecks' can occur when fierce and persistent westerlies force thousands of birds into the Western Approaches. Apparently birds are caught up in comparatively calm centres of strong circulations (Sage and King 1959).

There have been at least 68 Grey Phalaropes in London and all, apart from one in April 1981, were seen between August and December; September and October are the peak months with over 80% of all records, September being marginally the better of the two. In the 30 years from 1950-81 exactly 50 birds were reported of which 68% were in the southwest quarter; data such as this certainly suggest that most arrive either overland from the southwest (leaving the sea somewhere along the south coast) or from the west (leaving the sea in the Bristol Channel area). An easterly origin seems unlikely bearing in mind their scarcity off Essex and Kent coasts, in contrast however, the spring individual was seen after northeasterly winds during a marked influx of North Sea birds.

'Wrecks' of Grey Phalaropes provide a marked contrast to those of other species for two reasons. Firstly there has been no sighting in London away from water and secondly the 'wrecks' do not result in wholesale destruction either on the coast or inland; no bird has ever been found dead in London. This probably reflects their diet which consists entirely of surface organisms enabling them to feed on even the roughest or the smallest of waters; and it

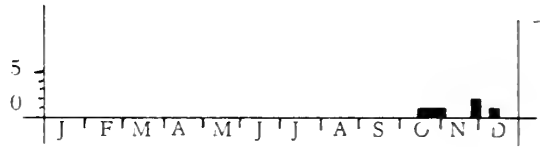
seems probable that many birds that reach our Area are able to reorientate and return to the sea.

Pomarine Skua

Stercorarius pomarinus

Northern Russia is the nearest locality at which this species breeds to our shores; it is a regular migrant off British coasts in spring in small numbers but considerably more regular in autumn (although not as numerous as the Arctic Skua).

The six London records all fall within the period from Oct. 19th to Dec. 11th. This is over one month later than the peak for Arctic Skua sightings and this very accurately reflects their later peak in migration times. It is generally accepted that those birds of this species that winter in the Indian Ocean migrate due north to their Russian breeding grounds, demonstrating that this species is perfectly capable of surviving far from the sea; possibly linked to this is the fact that three of the London records involved birds that stayed for one to three weeks. Although no birds have been found dead it may be that some of our sightings involve weakened individuals that are able to find easy pickings at the gull roosts. Most birds are likely to have approached from the east coast.



Arctic Skua

Stercorarius parasiticus

During the seabird survey in 1969/70, 1,086 pairs of this species were found in Britain (all in the extreme north), but by 1974/5 the total had more than doubled to 2,446 pairs. The bulk of the European population breeds in Norway (8,000 pairs), and most winter off the Atlantic coasts of South Africa and South America. It is a regular migrant off south and southeast coasts in spring, but scarce off east coasts; in autumn it becomes far more abundant off all coasts but especially off east-facing coasts during northerly winds. Many birds are known to head into the Baltic Sea and then overland through Finland en-route to their breeding grounds in northern Russia.

Up to 1982 there had been 72 records in London involving 92 birds, of these 15% occurred in spring (April to June), 79% in autumn (August to October) with singles in February, July, November and December (the latter record was undated). The spring sightings form no particular pattern and all involved single birds, and to some extent reflect the rather drawn-out coastal passage in spring. The autumn occurrences are far more concentrated and in fact 71% of all sightings fell between Aug. 14th and Sept. 30th, and the timing of many of these records is coincident with good numbers off eastern coasts. When weather conditions were known, or have been traced, for some of the more recent records it is found that they took place at the time of only light or moderate breezes. This strongly suggests that far from being stormblown many may actually choose to migrate overland. Interestingly there have been several coastal observations — mainly at the mouth of the River Swale, Kent (Taylor 1981) and at the head of the Wash (Seago 1967) — of groups of birds climbing high and heading in a S or SW direction, directly away from the open sea e.g. 100 heading SW at the head of the Wash in September 1980 (Seago 1981).



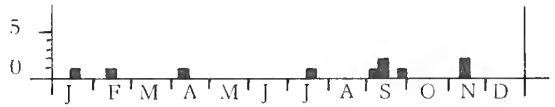
57% of all sightings were at reservoirs, and 87% of all sightings were at areas of water of some kind. It remains a distinct possibility that birds passing over do so at a great height, only descending occasionally to large bodies of water; if this is the case then we may only be seeing a very small proportion of those crossing our Area. Of those aged adults predominated, and formed almost all sightings of more than one bird (on only two occasions have two juveniles been seen together). For some reason adults seem more likely to travel in groups than the immatures. Whilst there seems little doubt that autumn birds will approach our Area from the east or northeast, spring birds probably do the reverse and approach from the south; certainly the two June individuals were heading in a N or NE direction.

Long-tailed Skua

Stercorarius longicaudus

This species has a similar breeding range to that of its congener the Arctic Skua, the centre of its West European range is in Sweden where 10,000 pairs are thought to nest. It is more highly oceanic than any other *Stercorarius* skua and less often seen from coastal promontories; however it is known to migrate overland at times (across British Columbia, Greenland and even over the Norwegian mountains en-route to Sweden).

There have been only three London records and one of these, in September 1937, was most probably outside our recording area; the second one was found dead on Sept. 26th 1966 at Queen Mary Res. and the third was at Wraysbury Res. on Aug. 30th 1978. No analysis is possible although their migration times are closely linked to those of Arctic Skuas, so they would be expected to fall into much the same occurrence patterns inland.



Great Skua

Stercorarius skua

The Bonxie is a scarce British breeding bird with 3,170 pairs in 1969/70, and most of these are in Shetland; it is pelagic outside the breeding season and during immaturity, although adults wander less than the immatures which do not return to their colonies for several years. It is generally commoner off east coasts on passage but has become significantly more frequent off Kent and Cornish coasts since the mid-1960s; despite this three-figure coastal counts are still distinctly unusual.

Interestingly flocks (of up to 50) have been seen heading inland at the mouth of the River Swale, Kent, (Taylor 1981) and the Wash, (Seago 1981) which suggests that — like the Arctic Skua — it quite deliberately heads overland on occasions. Bearing this in mind it is surprising that there have been only 11 London records; of these the four up to 1942 occurred in January, February, April and July, but the seven since then arrived in September (5) and November (2). The autumn records fit neatly into the pattern of occurrence in the West Midlands, since all 16 records in this region up to 1980 were between Aug. 27th and Nov. 9th (Harrison 1982). The records up to 1942 are thus less explicable than the subsequent autumn sightings, however there is a small spring passage around British coasts in April. It would be surprising if most birds did not approach from the east, and quite possibly many pass over too high to be seen.

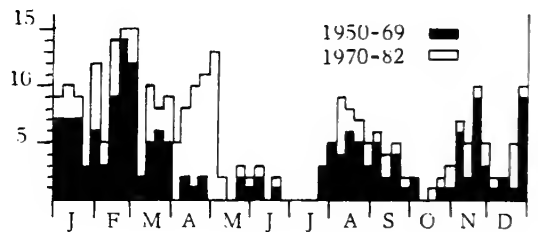
Sabine's Gull

Larus sabini

This delightful gull which has a circumpolar breeding distribution, yet can

winter as far south as South Africa, has been seen in our Area on four occasions; it is truly pelagic only away from its breeding grounds. It is normally associated with seawatches off southwest coasts following intense, fast-moving depressions which culminate in gale force westerly winds and it is at best scarce off east and south coasts.

All our records fell between Sept. 11th and Oct. 1st, exactly the pattern to be expected for this pelagic gull, and although four records are far too few for any useful comparative analysis to be made it would be surprising if most did not have a southwest origin — certainly the two Staines birds in 1950 arrived at the same time as Pectoral and Baird's Sandpipers at nearby Perry Oaks, suggesting a westerly approach. Of the two River Thames sightings one coincided with good totals off St Ives, Cornwall, whilst the other, conversely, coincided with several records off eastern coasts.



Kittiwake

Rissa tridactyla

This is one of the most widely distributed of all our oceanic species: it is also one that is increasing rapidly in the British Isles. Between 1959 and 1969 its population rose by 4% per annum and in 1969 the population stood at 470,000 pairs (78% in Scotland); since then, between 1969 and 1979/80, the population has risen by a further 3% per annum (2% per annum in Scotland). Interestingly the colony at Dover expanded from 17 pairs in 1967 to nearly 1,800 pairs in 1981. As well as being widely distributed it is, perhaps surprisingly, one of the most pelagic of all species under review spreading right across the North Atlantic in winter; in mid-summer these mid-Atlantic regions are vacated, although the immatures spend the summer off the west coast of Greenland and generally do not return to breeding colonies until they are three years old.

In the period 1950-1982 approximately 280 records of 765 birds were documented in London; in direct contrast to this was the decided scarceness of this species in London up to 1954 when it was described as a 'scarce winter visitor'. However in the late nineteenth century it was apparently 'of regular occurrence' (Homes 1957). Compared with pre-1954 years it has undergone something of an explosion in our Area, and this is probably linked to its increasing success as a breeding bird in Great Britain.

Scrutiny of the histogram shows several interesting patterns; firstly it is a regular winter visitor, but the isolated peaks demonstrate that this does not follow any logical sequence — presumably storms or extreme cold are responsible for their appearance (London's largest flock of 65 at Kew in 1979 was seen at the start of a very cold spell indeed). The very large peak in late February and early March was due to many sightings in the 1950s (but very few since during this period) and one day in particular in February 1959 when 187 birds were seen across the Area, and this coincided very exactly with a flock of 640 birds observed flying up the River Thames at Cliffe on the same day.

Nowadays it is well known as a spring passage migrant although this was not really evident until the 1970s when the number of observations increased dramatically (and this must be a real increase since it is unlikely to have been overlooked in the past). Most birds presumably have a south to north

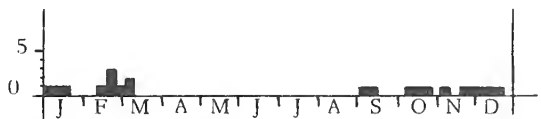
direction across a broad band since this passage is also well documented in the West Midlands (Hume 1976). It is rare as a summer visitor (only ten records between mid-May and late July from 1950-1982); and then regular as an early autumn visitor in August and to a lesser extent September, when mostly birds-of-the-year are involved, unfortunately with a rather high mortality rate. Finally the isolated peaks in November seem to fall into the rather haphazard pattern of winter records, although it may well reflect high numbers in the Thames estuary (20,000 were seen at the mouth of the River Swale, Kent, on 3rd Nov. 1968,) some of which may then either fly up the River Thames or pass randomly westward following the line of least resistance.

The Kittiwake is extremely well adapted to resist the fierce Atlantic gales and is easily capable of mastering a 55 knot wind (Rankin and Duffy 1948) merely flying over the large breakers and then settling on the other side; and consequently there are few documented 'wrecks' of this species. A 'wreck' in Cornwall in January and February 1957 produced at least 20 records in London (35% died) and the 'wreck' in April 1981 which involved 580 birds inland, rather surprisingly, only produced relatively few in the London Area.

Virtually all the large flocks (six flocks of between 50 and 65 all between November and February) passed straight through without stopping suggesting a continuous overland flight from coast-to-coast. Of those published as aged (67%) two out of every three were adults but interestingly, excluding the period from late July to September (when immatures outnumbered adults by 4:1), adults predominated with three out of every four. At least 6% of all birds are known to have died although the actual mortality rate may well be higher; 65% of deaths were noted between the last week of December and late March suggesting that cold weather movements are more likely to involve weakened or sick birds.

Guillemot

Uria aalge



The Guillemot was until recently the scarcest auk in the London Area although a recent surge in records suggests that it may become the commonest should sightings continue at their present rate. Birds return to their colonies very early, even before the end of the year in many places, although the peak off Kentish coasts is in November and December.

Knowledge on seasonal movements are at best speculative; west and southwest coast birds are thought to move south to the Bay of Biscay and even Gibraltar, whilst Scottish birds (especially from the northern colonies) probably move over to Danish and Norwegian coasts (where there have been several ringing recoveries). Marked decreases have taken place in south and west colonies, most notably on Lundy where the population fell from 19,000 pairs in 1939 to a paltry 1,647 in 1969/70 (Cramp 1974); conversely however there have been some increases in Scottish colonies. In contrast to the Puffin this species is a bird of inshore waters and becomes decidedly scarce away from coasts.

At present there are at least 21 London records, although only seven had occurred up to 1972 suggesting that this species is undergoing a change of status within our Area; certainly numbers off Kentish coasts during the mid-winter months have undergone a huge increase since 1979/80. 52% of all records have either been on the River Thames or immediately adjacent to it with a further 19% nearby in the Inner London parks, both of which point strongly to an eastern origin. Probably weak birds that arrive upriver may well be unable to resist the powerful tidal flow once within the upper reaches;

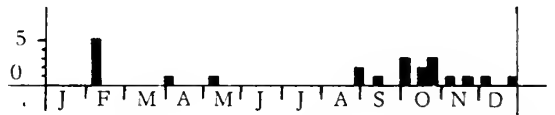
indeed one bird in 1972 picked up at Dartford was released at Sheppey but still found its way back upriver to as far as Greenwich where it died. This may have been a deliberate attempt to seek calmer waters.

The datespan of records falls between September and March (September to January excluding 1983), with no particular bias towards any month although the 'wreck' in February and March 1983 accounted for one-third of all records. Ages of birds remain impossible to assess, and origins almost as difficult with only one recovery of a ringed individual in the Area (a bird of the northern race *U.a.aalge* was picked up in 1933) which may perhaps be a pointer; certainly Scottish birds wintering at the fringes of the North Sea should be suspected of being the ones most likely to occur. The 'wreck' in 1983 followed a northeasterly gale which also suggests an eastern origin; it seems improbable that many birds arrive overland from the west.

Whilst, no doubt, some records involve weakened or sick birds (38% of all birds died up to 1982) it is possible that birds arriving inland may succumb to freshwater parasites. However the 1983 sightings did include three at reservoirs suggesting, perhaps, that fitter individuals could have been displaced.

Razorbill

Alca torda



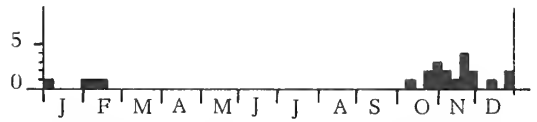
This species can almost be considered alongside its sibling species the Guillemot, there have now been 24 records and five of these were in February 1983. Razorbills return to their colonies, later than Guillemots, in January to February, with all birds returning by March and April. Movements are probably more complex than those of Guillemots, generally southwestern birds head south into the Bay of Biscay and beyond; Scottish birds apparently move over to Scandinavian coasts in late summer and autumn in large numbers, but interestingly some south coast birds move north into the North Sea and even up to Scandinavia. Decreases have occurred within the populations but have been less dramatic than the Guillemot. In terms of total numbers in Britain and Ireland Guillemots probably outnumber Razorbills by a ratio of 4:1; like the Guillemot this species is also a bird of inshore waters, spurning deeper waters except when migrating.

In contrast to Guillemot, Razorbill records have involved four flocks (all but one of all Guillemot sightings involved single birds), one of which comprised 16 birds, so although there have been 24 records there have been 52 birds. The reason for their apparent gregariousness compared with Guillemot is slightly puzzling; the timespan of records is very similar however, and apart from single sightings in April and May all occurred between September and February, the peak months being October (33%) and February (29%). Likewise 46% were on the River Thames or immediately adjacent to it; all the 20 birds known to have died were picked up at reservoirs or gravel pits (although 16 of these were in one flock) and this also testifies to the slim possibility of corpses being found on the River Thames. Interestingly up to 1982 47% of all records were at reservoirs or gravel pits compared with less than 1% of all Guillemot records in the same period, which suggests either that they follow the finer tributaries of rivers or that they may spread inwards from the coast in a more diffuse manner than the Guillemot.

With no ringing recoveries it is difficult to be certain of their origins but it would be surprising if they did not involve either the north, northeast or southern colonies; the reasons and direction of vagrancy is probably much the same as the Guillemot.

Little Auk

Alle alle



This diminutive auk is one of the most numerous seabirds of the North Atlantic, nesting on inhospitable sub-Arctic islands (e.g. Greenland and Spitzbergen) and wintering in countless thousands off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. It is reasonably regular off all coasts but much more so in northern Britain and Scotland; in southern Britain sightings outside the mid-October to mid-February period are scarce indeed and this is reflected in the London records which all fall within this timespan.

They are mostly observed off coasts during ‘flights’ or ‘wrecks’; ‘flights’ occur in winds strong enough to deflect birds onto coasts but not strong enough to force many to fly overland, and these probably account for most sightings off southern coastal promontories. ‘Wrecks’ however seem to occur only at the southern edge of the Little Auks’ range and are usually preceded by a build-up of the population to the south of its winter range; probably due to a localised food shortage which then coincides with prolonged stormy weather.

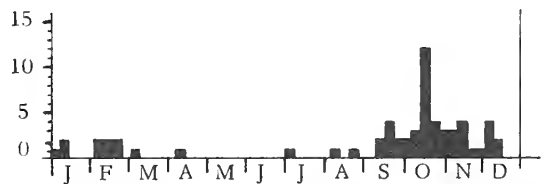
Three major ‘wrecks’ have occurred during this century, the first (and worst) was during January and February 1912, the second was in February 1950 and the latest (and least severe) was in February 1983. The 1912 ‘wreck’ mainly affected northeast Britain, and only produced one London record, following severe NE gales; by contrast the 1950 ‘wreck’ was centred on southwest Britain and followed severe WSW gales, but still only produced one London record. The 1983 ‘wreck’ resulted in at least two birds in London one of which died, and this followed NW and then NE gales.

The histogram shows a very clear peak in late October and November, indeed 58% of all records were in this short period (two undated records in January and February are omitted from the histogram). In fact most of our sightings coincide with ‘flights’ off eastern coasts — usually Norfolk — in late October and November; certainly the peak off Kentish coasts is extremely similar (although obviously on a greater scale). Clearly the greatest opportunity of seeing this species in the London Area would seem to be in this brief autumnal period following NE or NW gales.

Consequently it is likely that most Little Auks reaching London do so from an easterly direction generally coinciding with good totals off east coasts, indeed one of the few that probably arrived overland from the west was the 1950 bird. At least five birds are known to have died and the final toll is probably far higher despite the fact that at least 75% were seen at aquatic localities, since most of the birds are probably severely weakened or emaciated to have been forced inland in the first place.

Puffin

Fratercula artica



At one time the Puffin was one of the most numerous seabirds around British coasts, but it has undergone a drastic decline in recent times. This decline has been rather patchy and most pronounced along the west coasts (the number of pairs on North Rona fell from 100,000 in 1939 to 8,000 in 1958). Colonies in Shetland however — at least until recently — appear to be holding their own whilst, conversely, the colony on the Isle of May rose from 50 pairs in 1936 to 2,500 pairs in 1969/70.

All puffins (including juveniles) desert their colonies by early August and

disperse out to sea; in distinct contrast to Guillemot and Razorbill this species winters far offshore where they usually remain until late March and early April, when they return to their colonies. Birds from west coast colonies are thought to winter in the Mediterranean Sea and off Gibraltar and those from northeast Britain winter in the North Sea.

Consistent with its rather comical appearance the Puffin has a habit of turning up in rather incongruous situations — one held up traffic in the Strand in 1935, another collided with a cyclist in Sevenoaks in 1959 and yet another was found in a garden shed in 1961.

Up to 1983 there had been 61 traceable records — all, except a sighting of two birds together in 1983, involved single birds — of these 37 had been picked up or caught and whilst some were released again at least 12 died, although this last figure is probably a conservative estimate. 30 birds were aged of which 25 were immatures. The only clue as to their origins was provided by one found at Plaistow in January 1959 that had been ringed on Fair Isle the previous year. This, in addition to the fact that 20 of the sightings were on or immediately adjacent to the River Thames, certainly points to a northeastern origin for birds appearing in London. 24% had been seen up to 1948 with a further 60% in the next 13 years (1949-61), followed by a mere 14% in the next 22 years.

35% of records were in October, followed by November with 16%, September with 13% and December and February each with 12%. This is nicely comparable with records off the Kent coasts where the main peak is in November with lesser peaks in September and October (Taylor 1981). Records off north Kent coasts underwent a decline after 1959 — which tends to match the pattern in London — and nowadays one to three are seen annually usually following northerly gales; it certainly seems probable that most of these birds, and hence ours, originate from the North Sea. Since 83% of those birds that were aged were immatures it leads to a conclusion that most are young birds displaced in gales, and also with a 20% mortality rate of all birds it seems likely that very few are able to return to the sea again.

ADDENDUM

A recently published series of papers in *Bird Study* 31:79-110 discussing the seabird 'wreck' of February 1983 concludes that of the British-breeding auks involved the great majority were birds wintering in the North Sea. 94% of all ringing recoveries during the 'wreck' were from Scottish colonies. In addition far more Guillemots were found to be immatures than was the case with Razorbill.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Ringling Report for 1983

J. D. Hook

The majority of ringling groups and individual ringers who submitted their most notable recoveries and controls reported that their ringling totals for the year were approximately the same, or slightly higher, than in 1982. From the data received on pullus-ringling it would appear that a high breeding success-rate was achieved by both resident and summer migrant species, although several of the resident species lost early broods because of the adverse weather conditions which prevailed during April and early May. The principal reason for the high success-rate was probably the absence of prolonged heavy rainfall during the warm summer months, when anti-cyclonic conditions prevailed. The success-rate of ground- and reed-nesting species became more obvious with early dispersal movements. Especially noticeable were the numbers of juvenile *Acrocephalus* species and Willow Warblers ringling during this period. Several ringling groups reported their best ever year for the number of summer migrants ringling. Outstanding were the Rye Meads R.G. which began by netting a white-spotted Bluethroat in April and whose Annual Report showed that 836 House Martins, 635 Sedge Warblers, 383 Reed Warblers, 123 Lesser Whitethroats, 101 Garden Warblers, 234 Blackcaps and fair numbers of other summer visitors had been ringling. It was interesting to note that the same group caught 12 Water Rails in small walk-in traps.

Although the warm dry summer appeared to be beneficial to most passerine species, the same could not be said for the waterfowl in Regent's Park where a serious outbreak of botulism in the lake resulted in the death of several hundred birds, mainly surface feeders, with the Mallard population being particularly hard hit. The outbreak severely curtailed the ringling of young Tufted Ducks which had hatched and fledged in the park. This was disappointing particularly as a study was underway to determine whether these birds partake in an 'abmigration' (moving northeast in the spring with other birds which have wintered in the park) or participate in the normal migration pattern of British birds (moving south in the winter months).

First results were encouraging. A fledgling ringling on Aug. 20th 1982 was recovered at Hove, Jylland, Denmark on Sept. 16th, 78 km northeast, demonstrating that birds born in Regent's Park disperse or abmigrate considerable distances.

Details of lead-poisoning in Mute Swans submitted by the Runnymede R.G. showed that three ringling birds taken to Windsor for treatment were later released, one having had five lead weights and a fish-hook removed from its gizzard. The other two paired and all three were present at Yeoveney G.P., Berks, on Aug. 10th.

Greenfinch movements again peaked during March and April when nearly 3,000 were caught including eight birds which had been ringling during winter months in southwestern counties. This number of controls, together with ten recoveries of this species which had been ringling in the London Area and found dead or controlled during the first and last two months of the year in southern and southwestern counties, again indicates the species' tendency to move in a southwesterly direction during the late autumn and early winter and then return through the London Area during March and April. These movements do not appear to be associated with cold weather fronts as the recoveries tend to show consistency of date and, to some extent, location.

Analysis of local recoveries (under 10 km), with the exclusion of birds controlled, showed that 44% of the remaining recoveries were 'found dead

or dying', 37% 'killed by cat' and 13% 'road casualties', most of the remaining 6% were 'hit glass' and 'found drowned'. The 37% 'killed by cat' is slightly above the normal return rate even for suburban areas although it is possible that part of the 'found dead or dying' total were taken by cats. The same would apply to 'road casualties' and in all probability a higher percentage of the 'found dead or dying' would be the result of birds having been hit by vehicles. The number returned as 'found drowned', although small, was above-average and included various types of water-containers, a dog's bowl being the most unusual. This small increase could have been the result of birds being forced to find water away from their normal habitat during the long dry summer period.

SELECTED LATE RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS 1982

Two exceptionally late Russian recoveries worthy of mention were a female Blackbird ringed at Potters Bar, Herts., on Dec. 26th 1977 which 'hit wires' at Leningrad, USSR on Apr. 13th 1980, 2,105 km northeast, and a male Tufted Duck ringed in Hyde Park on Feb. 20th 1978 which was shot at Arkha'ngllsk, USSR on Sept. 15th 1981, 2,985 km northeast. Late 1982 recoveries and controls included a female Teal ringed at Rye Meads, Herts. on Jan. 18th 1981 and found dead at Salckunta, Juupajoki, Finland on July 15th, 1,848 km northeast. A Tufted Duck, originally ringed at Abberton Res., Essex on Nov. 16th 1977 and controlled in Kensington Gardens on Dec. 31st 1981, was shot in the USSR on Oct. 26th (no further details given). Another, which was ringed in Kensington Gardens on Dec. 31st 1981, was shot at Yanal-Henlts, USSR (Asia) on May 23rd, 4,085 km northeast. A Moorhen ringed at Maple Cross S.F., Herts. on Dec. 2nd 1973 was shot at Pas-de-Calais, France, nine years and eight days later on Dec. 10th 1982, 178 km southeast. The ring number on a Black-headed Gull ringed in Hyde Park on Dec. 31st 1981 was read and recorded at Malmo, Sweden on Aug. 29th 1982, 980 km northeast. The only late 1982 foreign control was a juvenile Chiffchaff ringed at Waltham Cross, Herts. on July 23rd and controlled in Gibraltar on Oct. 24th, 1,780 km south. Late 1982 British controls included a Sedge Warbler ringed at Errol, Tayside, Scotland on Aug. 5th and controlled at Rye Meads, Herts. on Sept. 4th and a Redpoll ringed at Boston, Lincs. on Aug. 1st, also controlled at Rye Meads on Oct. 31st.

RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS 1983

The only Continental duck recovery was the Tufted Duck previously mentioned in the introduction. Two other interesting recoveries of this species were a juvenile bird ringed at Rye Meads, Herts. on Aug. 15th 1982 and shot at Lough Ennal near Mulligar, Eire on Jan. 8th, 533 km northwest, and a female ringed at Abberton Res., Essex on Apr. 4th 1972 which was nesting in St. James's Park on July 3rd. In recent years there have been several recoveries in the Royal Parks of birds of this species ringed at Abberton Res. The only recovery of a bird-of-prey was a Kestrel ringed as a pullus at Enfield, Middx. on June 10th and found dead in a water-trough at Droxford, Southampton, Hants. on Aug. 26th, 110 km southwest. There were only two foreign wader recoveries, both were Dunlins which had been ringed at Swanscombe, Kent: one ringed on Jan. 26th 1980 was found dead at Grothusenkoog, Schleswig - Holstein, German F.R. on May 2nd, 674 km east and another ringed on Feb. 13th 1982 was controlled at Balgzand, Noord Holland, Netherlands on Mar. 16th, 345 km northeast.

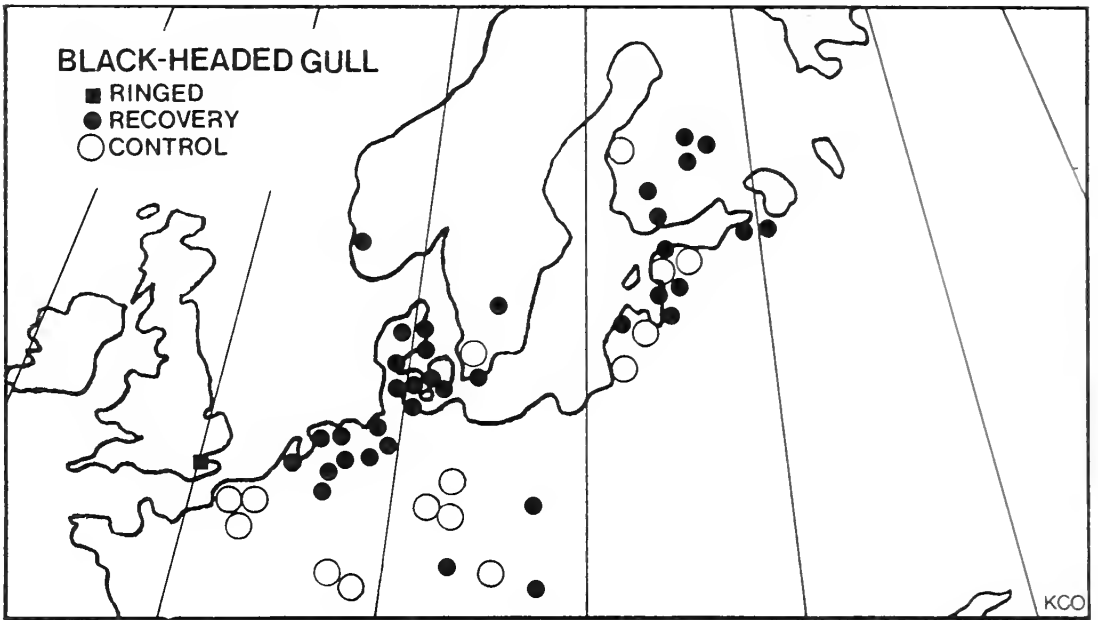


Fig. 1. Continental recoveries between 1968 and 1983 of Black-headed Gulls ringed by the Dartford Ringing Group.

There were seven foreign recoveries of Black-headed Gulls, two in the Netherlands and Denmark and one each in German F.R., Finland and Sweden; five of this total were shot or found dead, one was controlled and the other was a field-record of a bird ringed at Dartford S.F., Kent on Dec. 13th 1981 and controlled at Utterslew-Mose, Copenhagen, Denmark on Apr. 5th 1982 when a yellow ring marked F87 was added, subsequently identified at the same location on Apr. 9th 1983. One of this species which was shot at Broekpolder, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands, had been ringed at Littlebrook, Kent on Dec. 27th 1970, a longevity of 12 years. The only control of a foreign-ringed bird was one ringed when a chick at Kretuonas, Shvenchionys, Lithuania, USSR on June 23rd 1982, which was controlled in Regent's Park on Feb. 8th, 1,783 km west-southwest. A map (Fig. 1) depicting the Dartford Ringing Group's Continental recoveries and controls of this species 1968-83 shows that the Lower Thames winter populations are predominantly birds which breed from the Netherlands eastward to the Baltic States and Finland, away from the Baltic in the German F.R., German D.R., Czechoslovakia and Poland. All controls, other than Belgium-ringed birds, were ringed as chicks. The only foreign-ringed gull recovery was a Lesser Black-backed Gull ringed at Tweede Duinjes, Terschelling, Netherlands on July 9th 1982, which was found dead at the Queen Mary Res., Middx. on Aug. 8th, 460 km southwest. Another of this species which had been ringed on the Farne Islands as a chick on Aug. 12th 1963 was also found dead at Queen Mary Res., on Apr. 3rd, a longevity of 19½ years. A Common Tern ringed before it was fully fledged at Rye Meads on July 10th was caught dying at Lagos, Nigeria on Oct. 20th, 5,047 km south; all recoveries of this species in recent years have been first-year birds on migration or in their winter quarters.

A Turtle Dove, ringed as a nestling at Rye Meads on June 6th 1982, was shot at Ferreira do Alentejo, Portugal on Sept. 4th, 1,650km southwest. The only Swift recovery of note was a bird ringed at Maple Cross S.F., Herts. as a juvenile on June 23rd 1974 which was found dead at Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks. on May 10th, a longevity of eight years and ten months. The most distant Kingfisher recovery was a juvenile ringed at Maple Cross S.F. on

Aug. 4th 1982, and found dead at Christchurch, Dorset on June 23rd. Another bird of this species, ringed as a juvenile at Rye Meads on June 26th, was found dead at Rainham, Essex on July 13th, presumed to have dived into shallow water. The only two Sand Martin recoveries, other than local controls, were both juvenile birds controlled at Rye Meads; one ringed at Stubbers Green, West Midlands on July 18th was caught on Aug. 28th and the other ringed at Drumbeg Dryhen, Scotland on June 30th was caught on Sept. 14th.

A Dunnock, originally ringed at Littlebrook on Dec. 7th 1975, was retrapped at the same locality on Nov. 20th, a longevity of nearly eight years. A juvenile Robin ringed at West Thurrock, Essex on July 5th 1981, was killed by a cat at Tonbridge, Kent exactly two years later. Whilst this is not an exceptional movement, very few of this species ringed in the London Area have dispersed or moved over 30 km. There were only two Continental thrush recoveries: one, a Blackbird ringed at Joyden's Wood, Kent on Dec. 4th 1977, 'hit glass' at Erica, Drente, Netherlands on Mar. 22nd, 483 km east-northeast; the other, a Song Thrush ringed as a juvenile at Queen Mary Res., on May 3rd was found dead at Franeker, Friesland, Netherlands on Mar. 10th, 454 km east-northeast. A female Blackbird ringed at Maple Cross S.F. on Apr. 20th 1975, was killed by a cat at Ruislip, Middx. on Mar. 16th, in its ninth year.

The only foreign Sedge Warbler recovery reported was one ringed as a juvenile at Maple Cross S.F., on Sept. 11th 1982, and controlled in West Flanders, Belgium on Apr. 24th, 262 km east. A juvenile ringed at Yeoveney G.P., Bucks. on July 28th was controlled at Church Norton, Sussex on Aug. 15th. A Reed Warbler, ringed at St. Seurin D'Uzet, Charente-Maritime, France on Aug. 25th 1981, was controlled at Rye Meads on July 10th, 701 km north; and another of this species, ringed at Yeoveney G.P., on Aug. 27th 1982, was recovered at Tan-Tan, Morocco, 2,706 km south, but there is some uncertainty concerning the exact recovery date which is shown as June 9th and the method of recovery is unknown. In Britain the most distant Reed Warbler recovery was one ringed at Rye Meads on Aug. 17th 1982 and found dead at St Helens, Merseyside on May 13th, 263 km northwest. During the dispersal period there were several controls of juvenile Reed Warblers, other than local inter-site movements, the farthest being one ringed at Copmere, Eccleshall, Staffs. on Aug. 20th which was controlled at West Thurrock on Sept. 25th. It is unusual not to be able to report any foreign recoveries of *Sylvia* warblers. A Lesser Whitethroat ringed at Dungeness, Kent on Aug. 24th 1981 and controlled at Queen Mary Res., on May 7th; a Garden Warbler ringed at Westbury, Wilts. on July 31st was also controlled at Queen Mary Res., on Aug. 22nd; and a Blackcap ringed at Rye Meads on Aug. 9th 1981 which was controlled at Kesgrave, Ipswich, Suffolk on July 2nd, were the only recoveries worthy of mention. Retrap data on Willow Warblers again showed that a fairly substantial number of birds ringed in previous years returned to the breeding territories, including two ringed in 1979.

Retrap information received from the Maple Cross R.G. showed that on Sept. 12th 1982 a party of 11 Long-tailed Tits was ringed. On Dec. 31st, this year a party of 15 was caught, consisting of nine un-ringed birds and six retraps, five of the retraps having been ringed on Sept. 12th 1982. It is surprising to find five birds, from presumably a September family-party, together 16 months later after a complete breeding season. An unusually long distance for a Blue Tit recovery was one ringed at Potters Bar, Herts. on Mar. 6th and found dead or dying at Lower Beeding, Horsham, Sussex, 71 km south. There were no recoveries of *Corvidae* species other than local birds; a Jay was retrapped by the Hershams R.G. seven years and 15 days after it had been originally ringed. The farthest Starling recovery was a

female ringed at Beddington S.F., Surrey on Jan. 1st 1980 and found dead at Bykhow, Moscow, USSR on May 15th, 2,668 km east; and a male ringed at Rye Meads on Feb. 14th 1981 was found dead at Kletsk, Sinyavka, Minsk, USSR on May 10th, 1,817 km east. A local longevity record for the species was one ringed when a juvenile at Littlebrook, Kent on June 16th 1974 which was found dying at Barnehurst, Kent on Apr. 2nd, eight years and ten months later.

No foreign Greenfinch recoveries were reported, although one ringed at Darenth, Kent on Apr. 8th was controlled at Icart, Guernsey, C.I. on Nov. 6th. As previously mentioned, recoveries of birds of this species that have wintered in southwestern counties show a certain consistency. This was illustrated by one which was ringed at Ottery St. Mary, Devon on Feb. 19th and controlled at Potters Bar on Apr. 9th; previously in 1982, one ringed at the same Devon locality on Jan. 30th was controlled at Potters Bar on Apr. 10th. One bird which had deviated was ringed at Potters Bar on Mar. 27th 1982 and found dead at Littleover, near Derby on Mar. 9th, 163 km northwest.

There were numerous Siskin recoveries, including: one ringed at Egham, Surrey on Feb. 9th 1982 which was controlled at Egehs, Jylland, Denmark on Apr. 19th, 902 km northeast; one ringed at Joyden's Wood, Kent on Mar. 23rd 1980 which was 'found' at Rottweil-Gollsdorf, Sudmurtten Burg, German F.R., on Mar. 3rd, 710 km east, and one ringed at Potters Bar on Feb. 20th 1982 which was caught and caged at Tielen, Antwerpen, Belgium before being released on June 15th. British recoveries of this species included: one ringed at Potters Bar on Feb. 20th 1982, which was retrapped at the same location on Feb. 26th, controlled at Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks. on Mar. 3rd then again at Bonar Bridge, Highland Region on May 7th, 740 km north-northwest. Another possible Scottish breeding bird, which was ringed at Kempton Park, Middx. on Feb. 27th 1982 was controlled at Inverness, Highland Region on May 6th, 705 km north-northwest. It was noticeable that all recoveries of Siskin were male birds. A Linnet ringed as a nestling at Rye Meads on July 28th 1978 was controlled at West Thurrock on July 10th, a longevity of almost five years. The only Redpoll recovery of over 100 km was a bird ringed at Chobham Common, Surrey on Nov. 28th 1981 and killed by a cat near Warrington, Cheshire on May 17th, 260 km north-northwest. The Hershams R.G. reported a Bullfinch retrapped seven years and 299 days after the original date of ringing. Lastly a Reed Bunting ringed at Chailey Common, Sussex on Dec. 7th 1980 was controlled at Potters Bar on Feb. 20th.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

The compiler gratefully acknowledges the valuable information received from the following contributors: P. Delaloye (Maple Cross R.G.), G. Green (Hershams R.G.), K. J. Herber (Runnymede R.G.), P. Meridith (Dartford R. G.), K. Parsley, R. F. Sanderson, T. S. Spall (Rye Meads R.G.), B. Taggart, R. Taylor (Dartford R.G.) and J. P. Widgery. The artwork for Fig. 1 was expertly drawn by Ken Osborne.

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Note for Contributors

The Editor welcomes papers, short notes and photographs relating to the ornithology of the London Area, and will be pleased to advise authors on the acceptability of material at draft stage if desired.

Manuscripts All texts must be typewritten, double-spaced on A4 paper, using one side of the sheet only. A wide left-hand margin is essential. Lines should be full-out, except for new paragraphs and turned lines in lists. Underlining should be restricted to words to be set in italics. Tables and captions must be typed on separate sheets.

Style English names of birds and animals require initial capitals except after a hyphen, but group names and flowers do not. Scientific names should be underlined for italics, but only the first (generic) name needs an initial capital. Their use in the text is optional if listed in *The 'British Birds' List of Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Dates should take the form Apr. 28th, 1976; numbers under eleven should be spelt out in text; fractions should be decimalized; and, whenever possible, metric equivalents should be given in brackets after English measurements. Optional spellings should adopt the forms recommended by Fowler and/or the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Abbreviations should be standard. Full points should be omitted from well-known initials, such as BTO, LNHS and RSPB, but retained in 'e.g.', 'i.e.' and 'et al.' Quotation marks, if used, should be single not double. Publications should not be in quotes, but underlined for italics. Parenthesis within brackets should be avoided. References need to adopt the following style:

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LONDON BIRD REPORT



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London Natural History Society

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Cover:

Black-winged Stilts by *G. M. Haig*

Photographs

Opposite p. 56 Pectoral Sandpiper at Staines Reservoir, September 1984 (*G. M. Haig*). Lesser Yellowlegs at Beddington S.F., September 1984 (*R. B. Hastings*).

Opposite p. 72 Common Nighthawk found at Barnes Common, October 1984 (*B. A. Marsh*).

World List Abbreviation: *Lond. Bird Rep.*

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London Bird Report 1984

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Assisted by an editorial team of: M. K. DENNIS, J. FITZPATRICK, G. M. HAIG, R. B. HASTINGS, J. D. HOOK, F. H. JONES, P. NAYLOR and K. C. OSBORNE.

Introduction

There are two additions to the recording team this year. The Editor has stepped down from the Herts. & Bucks. recordership to devote more time to the production of the report. We welcome two new recorders — Graham White, well known in the Lea Valley and whose knowledge of this region will greatly assist the Committee, takes over the Herts. recordership. Gavin Haig, equally well known in southwest London and familiar to readers of this report for his excellent line drawings, takes on the Bucks. recordership.

Once again it is a pleasure to note yet another increase in the number of contributors. Last year's total of 423 was as good as in any previous year, however the total of 502 this year is appreciably higher. We remain indebted to everyone who sends in their sightings since it enables us to maintain the high standard of the *London Bird Report*. One puzzling feature not revealed by these figures is the high turnover of contributors; 144 of the contributors to last year's bird report did not send in any records this year. This means that there were 223 new contributors this year — a staggeringly high total, and perhaps gives some indication as to why the number of contributors can fluctuate so widely from year-to-year.

Inner London is one part of our Area that tends to be a little neglected, despite a slight increase in records in recent years. Observers are asked to submit all sightings for this region so we can monitor more accurately the fortunes of the birdlife in the heart of the capital.

One additional feature in this year's bird report is the resurrection of the Notes section, this will contain accounts of first records for the London Area, observations of unusual behaviour and other items of interest.

Regular readers will note the change in name of Harefield Moor G.P., which will in future be referred to as Broadwater G.P., this brings us into line with local natural history groups; additionally the yachting club and the gravel extraction company use the name Broadwater.

Histograms make an appearance this year in the systematic list, these will probably only appear on an occasional basis to complement the species' accounts, or to illustrate a particularly good year for certain species.

Once again we have an excellent selection of drawings in this year's report and we remain indebted to the three artists for their efforts which considerably enhance the report.

The list of species requiring descriptions has been revised this year having remained largely unchanged for many years. A revision had become necessary to update this list to bring it in line with the change of status of many species that has taken place during the last two decades.

And lastly a plea. Because Britain's capital city lies at the nucleus of our recording Area it is not surprising that the land within its boundaries is in a constant state of flux. The habitats that each of us birdwatch in are often of a very transient nature. For instance flooded meadows (a scarce natural habitat nowadays) can in turn become a gravel pit, a rubbish tip, a quagmire of sludge, an area of waste ground and lastly industrial estates or motorways; and all within the space of ten years. Most of us accept this almost

unquestioningly, we can probably all think of favourite areas that have been transformed during the last decade or so from prime birdwatching habitat into a virtual desert. The LNHS, due to the purchase of a computer, now has the facility for a rapid mobilisation of vital details regarding important sites. Readers are asked to contact the publicity officer — Keith Betton — if they know of any areas that are particularly under threat. We desperately need to preserve all habitats, both transient and traditional.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editor gratefully acknowledges the enthusiastic support of all observers who contributed records to this edition of the *London Bird Report*. He especially thanks the recorders and writers who helped to compile the systematic list. The three artists whose fine illustrations appear this year are Gavin Haig, Ken Osborne and John Wilczur to whom we extend our thanks. Gavin Haig, Rupert Hastings and Barry Marsh provided the photographs, and Ken Osborne provided the excellent distribution maps that appear in the Canada Goose paper. Lastly the Editor would like to thank Gavin Haig, Rupert Hastings, and Peter Naylor who helped at the proof reading stage.

He also acknowledges the many courtesies extended to members by the Greater London Council, the Thames Water Authority and the Port of London Authority. Thanks are also due to the following organisations for their generous help in the exchange of records:

British Birds Rarities Committee
 Buckinghamshire Bird Club
 Essex Birdwatching and Preservation Society
 Hertfordshire Natural History Society
 Kent Ornithological Society
 Lea Valley Project Group
 Reading Ornithological Society
 Surrey Bird Club

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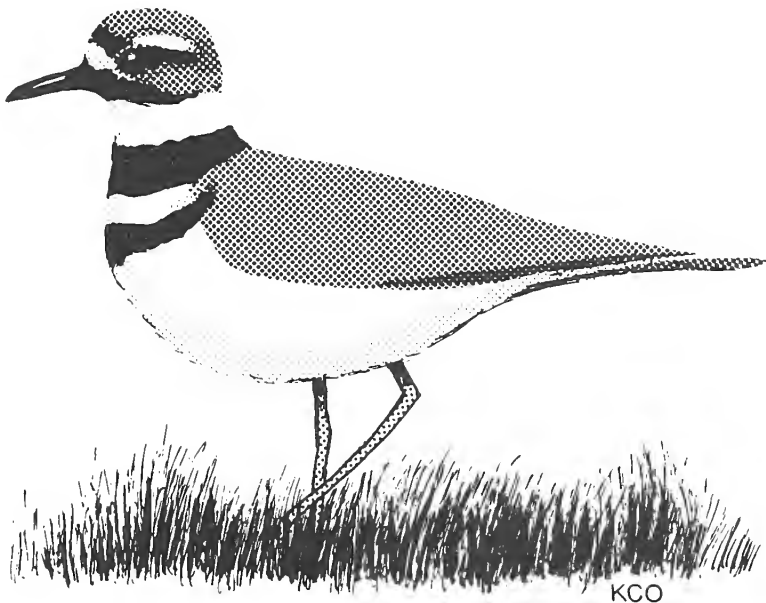
*including records on the Lower Thames from London Bridge to Tilbury

†including records on the River Thames from Staines to Wandsworth

Review of the Year

1984 will be well remembered for the first occurrence in London of four birds, namely **Common Nighthawk**, **White-rumped Sandpiper** and **Killdeer**, all from North America, and a **Balearic Shearwater** – the race of **Manx Shearwater** from the Western Mediterranean. The **Nighthawk** must rank alongside the **Little Shearwater** of 1912 as the most surprising visitor to London this century, and it must be said that the **Balearic Shearwater** was hardly more expected. The total number of species recorded this century now stands at 315*. 1984 also produced the second ever **Blue-winged Teal** and the third **Marsh Sandpiper** for London.

January began as usual with a flurry of observer activity, so that in the first few days a scattering of interesting finds included **Red-throated Diver**, three **Shags**, a **Merlin** and a **Peregrine**, and two **Mediterranean Gulls** both at Beddington S.F. A **Great Skua** was a surprise visitor to Sevenoaks G.P., early in the month, where it stayed for several days. On 7th a roosting **Iceland Gull** was found and on 9th a flock of 70 **White-fronted Geese** passed west over Kew. Strong winds in mid-month produced some **Kittiwakes**, then conditions worsened on 21st and 22nd when blizzards in northern England forced a large movement of **Lapwings** and **Fieldfares** through London, both numbering 1,000 at some sites. Temperatures rose again towards the end of the month and the 29th was prominent with arrivals of **Slavonian Grebe**, three **Shags**, a **Merlin** in Middlesex, a record total of 500 **Ringed Plover** at West Thurrock and 8,000 **Woodpigeons** together at Bulphan Fen. The month's biggest surprise came right at the end though, when a **Killdeer** was found at Beddington S.F. on 31st, only to depart at lunchtime on Feb. 1st before many people had the chance to see it.



From January to February, **Long-eared Owls** were known to be at three roosts, involving a total of 12 birds, and a dead one was found at a fourth site on Feb. 3rd. Very strong westerlies blew on 5th and 6th but seemed to produce little apart from single **Red-necked** and **Slavonian Grebes**. In the middle third of the month **Shags** appeared at five places, perhaps an aftermath of the earlier winds. Three **Whooper Swans** flew over Rye Meads on 12th, but more unusual were a low-flying **Little Auk** at Barn Elms Res. on 15th and a **Puffin** stranded at Harlow on 23rd. In the last six days of the month, singles of **Slavonian Grebe**, **Brent Goose** and **Great Grey Shrike** all appeared on one date only.

A scattering of winter visitors passed through in early March and included 35 **Bewick's Swans** over Bushy Park on 4th. On 8th a **Woodlark** was found at Broadwater G.P. but the general pattern continued to mid-month of such regulars as **Slavonian Grebe** and **Shag**, together with singles of **Glaucous** and **Iceland Gull**. The rarest bird of the month was a **Guillemot** picked up at Northfleet on 15th, the same day on which the first **Wheatear** made it through. Warmer air arrived from the south on 24th and immediately brought an **Avocet**, followed by two north-bound **Iceland Gulls** the next day. **Common Scoters** appeared throughout the month and finished with a total of 13 seen at six sites.

April began quietly with cool northerlies for nearly two weeks but the weekend of 7th and 8th produced a surprisingly widespread movement of **Common Scoters** with 15 occurring at six localities. An unusually early **Arctic Skua** visited Staines Res. on 8th, when there was also a **Peregrine** at Harefield, and a **Mediterranean Gull** was found next day at Barn Elms Res. Warmer westerlies arrived on 14th and brought in **Avocet**, the first **Garganey** and **Cuckoo**, and a **Hoopoe**. In the next three days there was a second **Hoopoe**, the first **Swift**, **Whinchat** and **Pied Flycatcher**. Quite a surprise on 20th was London's second **Blue-winged Teal**, a female that stayed at Stocker's Lake for eight days and which was on intimate terms with a drake Shoveler! Warm weather with dry easterlies persisted from 22nd and a good movement of **Black Terns** occurred on 25th, to be followed by widespread sightings of **Bar-tailed Godwits**. On 28th London's third **Marsh Sandpiper** was discovered at Broxbourne G.P., unfortunately departing before the end of the day. April closed with a **Hoopoe** at East Croydon on 30th, when there was also the last of the month's ten **Ring Ouzels**.

The weather was warm and cyclonic during the first seven days of May with winds from the south and east. Bird arrivals were highly varied and interesting, beginning on 1st with a good passage of **Black Terns** and a most unseasonal **Velvet Scoter** at Queen Mother Res. The following day a massive record flock of 45 **Little Gulls** had gathered at Staines Res. and a male **Golden Oriole** was at Hilfield Park Res. More **Little Gulls** and a **Garganey** occurred on 3rd, but variety increased sharply on 4th with the appearance of **Osprey**, **Avocet**, **Wryneck** and **Golden Oriole** at well scattered sites, and a group of 11 **Common Scoters** at Staines Res. The southern influence continued on 5th and 6th with **Marsh Harrier** and **Hoopoe**, together with good movements of **Bar-tailed Godwit** and **Whimbrel**. The sight of the month came on 7th when two **Black-winged Stilts** were found near Watford, these subsequently moving to Perry Oaks S.F. on 8th and 9th, where they joined the lingering **Avocet** to make a fine Mediterranean combination. An **Osprey** and a pair of **Garganey** also came in at this time, but from 8th cold northeasterlies set in, lasting until 13th. These produced a leaner spell in which the highlights were a further **Osprey** and a **Temminck's Stint** on 10th and a pair of **Golden Orioles** on 13th. From 14th the anticyclonic conditions gave way to wetter weather and easterlies, and on 15th a **Garganey** and a **Purple Heron** appeared, the latter putting in only a short stay at Wraysbury G.P. The second half of May was a considerably quieter period; some movement on the 17th and 19th included groups of seven **Whimbrel** and 12 **Oystercatchers**, and the month's only two **Little Terns**. Otherwise May passed on to a close, with a slight resurgence of **Avocet** on 23rd, **Osprey** on 27th and **Garganey** on 28th reflecting some of the impressive activity at the start of the month.

June was typically quiet but unusually there were three sightings of **Buzzard**, and a much rarer **Honey Buzzard** was disturbed from a wood near Oxshott on 18th. On 20th a female **Golden Oriole** was found in Thorndon Park. Three species were very much out of season; a **Jack Snipe** spent all of June and July at Stanstead Abbots G.P. and was even displaying on June 7th

and 17th; then on consecutive dates, 21st and 22nd, singles were found of both **Fieldfare** and **Redwing**.

The 1984 breeding season will unfortunately be remembered for the very poor numbers of **Sand Martins** that arrived to breed. Other species at a particularly low ebb included **Barn Owl**, with no breeding records, **Nightjar** now down to two sites, and **Grasshopper Warbler** with only one pair known to have bred. **Whitethroats** suffered a substantial decrease in Essex, **Tree Pipits** had declined somewhat and there was widespread feeling that **House Martins** were scarcer. In the case of such summer visitors as those above, it is not always clear whether decreases are due to habitat alteration, or to climatic changes at home or abroad. In contrast, some more or less resident species increased. Three pairs of **Ruddy Duck** nested, there was the highest total of breeding **Sparrowhawks** for over 30 years, **Stock Doves** reached a new height of 120 pairs and **Stonechats** increased to 38 pairs. Among the summer visitors that had a good year, **Common Terns** were prominent with at least 64 pairs breeding to set a new record for London.

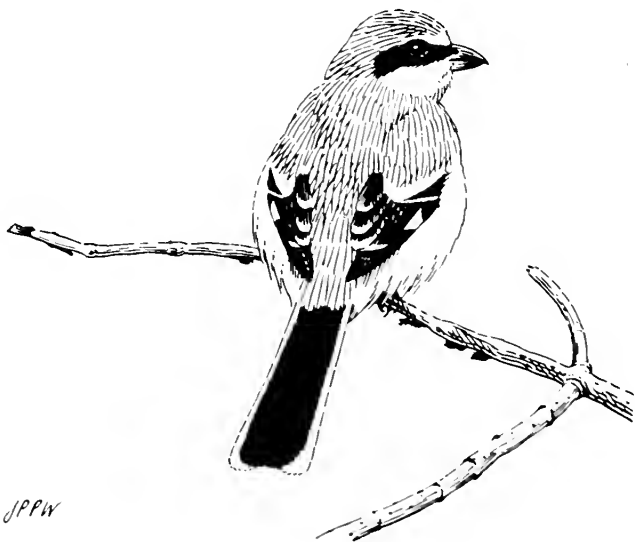
July opened with a **Quail** calling in a field near Rickmansworth on the 1st, and it remained here for more than a fortnight. Two **Peregrines** at West Wickham on the 5th and Elmers End S.F. the following day were of questionable origin. **Common Scoters** appeared at Wm. Girling Res. on the 1st and Island Barn Res. on the 25th, and an adult **Mediterranean Gull** was at Beddington S.F. on the 24th, but otherwise the month was mainly notable only for waders, with **Little Ringed Plovers** peaking on 14th at Kempton Park Res. (30) and 27th at Rainham Marsh (40), and the earliest London **Pectoral Sandpiper** appearing at Perry Oaks S.F. on 15th. The end of the month produced 20 **Whimbrel** flying west over Osterley Park on the 29th, and 15 **Green Sandpipers** at Beddington S.F. on 30th, which date also saw London's first **White-rumped Sandpiper**, an adult, at Perry Oaks S.F. This long-awaited Nearctic visitor stayed until Aug. 12th, but was not always easy to find. A **Manx Shearwater** found dead at Wraysbury G.P on the 29th was the second in this month for London, but was totally eclipsed by the discovery of another at Island Barn Res. on Aug. 17th of the race *P.p. mauretanicus*, known as **Balearic Shearwater**. Otherwise, August produced no great rarities and, being mainly hot and dry, no unusual weather patterns. Consequently, passage was fairly steady, though a concentrated influx of **Pied Flycatchers** occurred between the 13th and 16th, involving at least 25 birds – more than the annual total in some recent years. **Wheatears** peaked at around the same time. Migrant ducks were represented by **Garganey** at five sites and **Common Scoter** at three; a **Buzzard** appeared on the 8th and 12th at Maple Cross S.F., and a fine **Goshawk** performed at Bookham Common on the 27th. Wader passage was quite good; **Greenshanks**, in particular, showing in good numbers, whilst highlights were seven **Bar-tailed Godwits** flying south at Barn Elms Res. on the 2nd and a **Red-necked Phalarope** at King George V Res. on the 16th and 17th. The 4th saw 60 **Black**, 150 'Commic' and three **Little Terns** at West Thurrock. **Wrynecks** appeared from the 22nd, with four seen by the month's end and, finally, two early **Fieldfares** were at Brent Res. on the 18th.

September began in traditional style with **Manx Shearwaters** at Wraysbury Res. on the 1st and Rayners Lane on the 5th. Two **Marsh Harriers** at Rainham Marsh on the 16th were followed by a **Hen Harrier** the next day. Waders were well represented, Beddington S.F. claiming the best, a **Lesser Yellowlegs**, which obligingly stayed for a week from the 24th. Also notable were a **Purple Sandpiper** at Teddington Lock on the 9th and 10th, 55 **Knot** upriver at West Thurrock on the 2nd, and four different **Pectoral Sandpipers** during the month. Staines Res. was the place to be on the 29th, where two of the **Pectoral Sandpipers** were creeping in the north basin while a **Grey Phalarope** was bobbing in the south. **Arctic Terns** uncharacteristically

peaked during the month, with 15 at Staines Res. on the 29th, and **Black Tern** numbers stayed high, with 62 at Tilbury on 17th. A **Great Skua** roosted overnight on the Lea Valley reservoirs on the 22nd, and a disorientated young **Puffin** was grounded in Inner London on the 25th. Quality passerines were a **Red-backed Shrike** in the Lea Valley on the 15th and 16th, and a frustrating **Icterine** or **Melodious Warbler** along the causeway of Queen Mary Res. on the 18th.

October weather was unremarkable, with winds mainly from the north and west, the latter undoubtedly influencing the arrival of the year's most surprising addition to the London list – a **Common Nighthawk**, which was found in a moribund state on Barnes Common on the 23rd, but not identified until after it had died on the 28th. The month was also notable for some late **Swifts**, the last being at Alexandra Park on the 18th. Otherwise things were fairly quiet. Three **Merlins** were the first sign of a good winter for this species. A late **Pectoral Sandpiper** at Staines Res. on the 21st and a **Grey Phalarope** at King George V Res. from the 4th to the 8th were the waders of the month. A '**Black Brant**' at Staines Res. from the 27th to Nov. 23rd, was perhaps of dubious origin, however 21 genuine **Brent Geese** flew west at Rainham Marsh on the 10th. Also of dubious origin was a **Raven** at Bermondsey on the 28th. Summer migrants last seen this month, in addition to the **Swifts**, were **Sand Martin** (on the 13th), **Whinchat** (1st), **Turtle Dove** (1st) and **Black Tern** (29th). The month closed with a **Hen Harrier** near Radlett on the 30th and a small influx of **Short-eared Owls**, which continued into early November, with up to ten birds at Rainham Marsh in that month.

November's weather continued the unexceptional pattern, until some vigorous westerlies swept across the Area towards the end of the month, which were probably responsible for a **Leach's Petrel** at Cheshunt G.P. on the 25th. Two very late migrants were a **Garganey** in the Roydon area until the 18th and a **Cuckoo** at Eltham on the 4th. At Queen Mary Res. two **White-fronted Geese** were seen on the 2nd and a total of 48 **Brent Geese** on the 9th; whilst the best duck was a male **Eider** on the River Thames at Rainham on the 18th. An **Avocet** and **Spotted Redshank** were at Staines Res. on 13th, the latter remaining into 1985. Of three **Red-necked Grebes** during the month one was in interesting first-year plumage and it remained (at Queen Mother Res.) into 1985. A **Little Auk** at King George V Res. on the 10th was, unfortunately, dead, but coincided with a **Red-breasted Merganser**, a **Slavonian Grebe** and three **Snow Buntings**, very much alive, at the same locality! Passerines included the regular Lea Valley **Great Grey Shrike**, a **Lapland Bunting** at Fairlop on the 3rd, up to 40 **Bearded Tits** at Rainham Marsh, and a **Dartford Warbler** in Bushy Park on the 17th and 18th.



Early December was mild but the weather became colder for a while in mid-month, and again towards the end of the month with both heavy rain and fog, but no really severe conditions. The mildness of the early winter was well illustrated by a count of 13 **Chiffchaffs** at Wraysbury/Horton G.P.'s on the 28th. Two **Great Northern Divers**, four **Red-necked** and two **Slavonian Grebes** graced the reservoirs during the month, whilst **Avocets** brightened the scene on the 2nd, with 13 at Staines Res. and seven at Island Barn. Three **Glaucous Gulls** appeared (two in the Wraysbury Res. gull roost) and **Long-eared Owls** were found at four sites. **Fieldfares** and **Redwings** arrived with a vengeance early in the month, with the latter peaking at an amazing 5,660 at Little Parndon. A stranded **Velvet Scoter** was picked up in fog at Shooters Hill on the 11th. Raptors included a **Peregrine** at Rainham on the 9th, a **Buzzard** at Cheshunt G.P. on the 1st and a female **Merlin** was seen at Staines Res. on various dates. Two notable wader counts were eight **Jack Snipe** at Perry Oaks on the 8th and eight **Turnstones** at Grays on the 29th. **Firecrests** were at four sites, including up to three birds together at Yiewsley, and a **Yellow Wagtail** found Beddington S.F. to its liking throughout the month. The year closed in fine style with a **Kittiwake** at Wraysbury G.P. and an **Iceland Gull** at the Wraysbury Res. gull roost on the 31st.

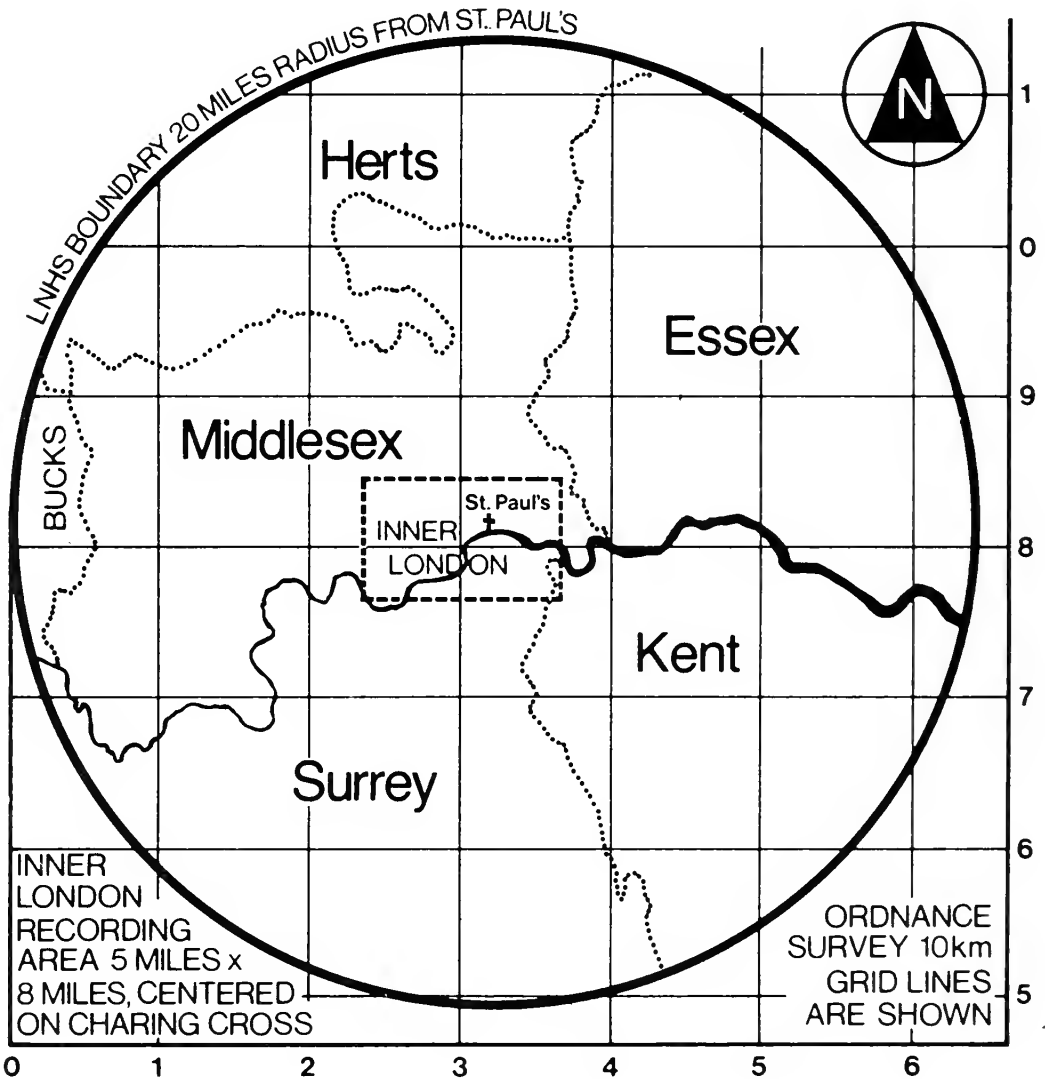
*This total does not include Lady Amherst's Pheasant which was included in error in the Checklist of the Birds of the London Area, (*LBR* 43: 78-84), but does include Snowy Owl which was omitted from this list in error. This apart the Checklist remains unchanged.

First and Last Dates of Migrants

<i>Summer Migrants</i>	<i>Arrival</i>			<i>Departure</i>		
Hobby	Apr. 24	Staines Res.	MJE	Oct. 6	Staines Res.	BAR
Little Ringed Plover	Mar. 22	Spout Lane Fields	TJD	Sept. 29	Rainham Marsh	MKD
Common Tern	Apr. 5	Staines Res.	JAS	Oct. 6	Queen Mary Res.	AVM,PN
Arctic Tern	Apr. 6	Staines Res.	JAS	Oct. 11	Littlebrook	DD
Black Tern	Apr. 21	Staines Res.	mo	Oct. 29	Hilfield Park Res.	CIB
Turtle Dove	Apr. 21	Stanstead Abbots G.P.	GJW	Oct. 1	Staines Res.	JAS
Cuckoo	Apr. 14	Rye Meads S.F.	GJW	Nov. 4	Regent's Park	TRD _r
Nightjar	May 6	Sevenoaks G.P.	RHT	Nov. 4	The Tarn, Eltham	JW
Swift	Apr. 16	three localities	RNS	Oct. 18	Alexandra Park	APBR
Sand Martin	Mar. 25	Broxbourne Woods	GJW	Oct. 13	Rainham Marsh	MKD
Swallow	Mar. 28	Broxbourne G.P.	RRG	Nov. 4	Wraysbury G.P.	AVM, PN
House Martin	Mar. 31	Bedfont Quarry	RAD	Oct. 29	Wraysbury G.P.	AVM, PN
Tree Pipit	Apr. 3	Foots Cray Meadows	JF	Oct. 29	Regent's Park	TRD _r
Yellow Wagtail	Mar. 30	Walthamstow Res.	DRW	Sept. 16	Batler's Green	JHT
Nightingale	Apr. 25	Walthamstow Res.	JF	Oct. 17	Headley Heath	CKD,POD
Redstart	Apr. 4	Croxley Mill	RAP	Sept. 2	Barn Elm Res.	RBH
Whinchat	Apr. 15	Ham Lands	JHr	Oct. 22	West Thurrock	DCy
Wheatear	Mar. 15	Kempton Res.	AVM,PN	Oct. 7	Orpington	EHJ
Ring Ouzel	Mar. 29	Wimbledon Common	DLW	Nov. 8	Alexandra Park	APBR
Grasshopper Warbler	Apr. 20	Barking	ARP	Oct. 18	London Airport	JAS
Sedge Warbler	Apr. 13	Walthamstow Res.	PF,PL	Oct. 18	Cheshunt G.P.	MJF,PT
Reed Warbler	Apr. 4	Epsom Common	LMW	Oct. 9	Cheshunt G.P.	ADW
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr. 16	Cheshunt G.P.	ADW	Nov. 17	Queen Mary G.P.	HRG
Whitethroat	Apr. 8	Maple Cross S.F.	MCRG	Oct. 1	Queen Mary Res.	AVM
Garden Warbler	Apr. 20	Alexandra Park	NB	Sept. 30	Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG
Wood Warbler	Apr. 20	Stone Wood	DRG	Oct. 11	Regent's Park	JPW
Willow Warbler	Mar. 30	Stanstead Abbots G.P.	HPM	Sept. 6	Ilford	CG _n
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr. 29	Rye Meads S.F.	GJW	Nov. 17	Elmers End S.F.	BRG
Pied Flycatcher	Apr. 15	Richmond Park	ED _r	Oct. 10	Barn Elms Res.	RBH
		Cheshunt G.P.	GJW	Sept. 30	Ilford	CG _n
		three localities	per PEJ			
		Bleachingley	SJG			
		Foots Cray Meadows				
<i>Winter Migrants</i>	<i>Departure</i>			<i>Arrival</i>		
Jack Snipe	May 2	Rye Meads S.F.	RMRG	Oct. 6	Fishers Green	GJW
Fieldfare	May 18	Barnes Common	JPPW	Aug. 18	Brent Res.	ASMS
Redwing	May 28	Home Park	SDBWS	Sept. 25	Mitcham Common	mo
Brambling	May 5	Hilfield Park Res.	CIB,MJE	Sept. 16	Sevenoaks G.P.	JT
Siskin	May 7	Croxley Green	NRJ	Aug. 27	Eltham	JW

Recording Arrangements

The Society's recording Area, which in this report is called the 'London Area', is bounded by a circle of 20 miles radius centred on St. Paul's Cathedral. Within the Area, the original county boundaries are used for recording purposes, rather than the new administrative counties. In addition, there is a special recording zone for Inner London (a rectangle 5 miles \times 8 miles, centred on Charing Cross). All records of interest are welcome from members and non-members, and these should be sent to the appropriate recorder (see list on page 4).



It will assist the speedy entering of records if the Society's recording sheets are used (available from recorders on request), and if species are listed in the order followed in the *London Bird Report*. Separate sheets should be used for each recording area. Completed recording sheets should be submitted in August for the period January to July, and in early January for August to December.

Records of rare and unusual species in the London Area are examined by the Records Committee before inclusion in the *London Bird Report*. Published records need to stand the scrutiny of not only today's readers but also anyone who in future years may refer to the systematic list. Brief field-notes are therefore required to provide supporting evidence of correct identification and authenticity for the following species:

All rare species**All out of season migrants****All species of less than annual occurrence**

All divers

Red-necked and Slavonian Grebes

Black-necked Grebe (except at regular haunts)

Petrels and shearwaters

Gannet and Shag; Bittern

Bewick's and Whooper Swans

All wild geese (except Canada and Greylag)

Ferruginous Duck and all sea ducks

All birds-of-prey excluding Kestrel, Sparrowhawk and Hobby (descriptions of the latter two species are required in Inner London)

Quail and Spotted Crake

Avocet; Kentish Plover; Temminck's Stint; Pectoral, and Purple Sandpipers; all phalaropes

All skuas

Mediterranean, Iceland and Glaucous Gulls; Kittiwake

All terns except Common and Black

All auks

Long-eared and Short-eared Owls (except the latter at regular haunts)

Hoopoe and Wryneck; Woodlark Races of *Anthus spinoletta* other than Rock and Water Pipit at regular localities

White Wagtail in autumn

Races of *Motacilla flava* other than Yellow Wagtail *M.f. flavissima*

Ring Ouzel

Cetti's Warbler and Wood Warbler in autumn

Firecrest and Pied Flycatcher

Bearded Tit and Golden Oriole

All shrikes

Twite and Crossbill

Lapland and Snow Buntings

The above list of species requiring descriptions is not intended to be, nor could it be, comprehensive and readers are asked to use their own guidance and common sense. The species listed above are essentially those that appear annually in London, but for which we still require descriptions prior to publication.

The status of certain species (especially waders) varies considerably within our recording Area, and also from year-to-year, and recorders are entitled to request a description of any species for which they feel further details are required.

Field notes for each observation should be submitted to the recorder immediately following the observation, rather than waiting until the end of the year. Evidence needs to be brief but relevant, and should include a description of the essential features upon which identification was based, relative size, flight, calls, duration and distance of observation, and the observer's previous experience of this and similar species.

NATIONAL RARITIES

Records of national rarities (see list in *British Birds* 67 : 347-8) should be submitted preferably via the local recorder for forwarding to the national committee. If sent direct, a copy of the submission should be sent to the recorder. Observers are asked to submit records promptly to ensure acceptance and publication in the same year.

RARE BREEDING BIRDS

Breeding records of rare species (see list in *British Birds* 67 : 174) should be submitted preferably via the local recorder (stating degree of confidentiality required) for forwarding to the national Rare Breeding Birds Panel. All reports of these species (and others, less rare) are treated in complete confidence at county level. Names of localities are never published and only the name of the county is given in the *London Bird Report*.

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 F. E. Welton
 B. J. P. Weston
 C. W. Westwood
 J. J. Wheatley
 G. J. White
 N. Whitehouse
 C. Whiteman
 P. Whiteman (PWn)
 P. A. Whittington
 Mrs L. M. Whittome
 J. P. Widgery
 J. P. P. Wilczur
 P. A. Williams (PAWs)
 Ms J. Williams-
 Chandley (JW)
 I. Williamson
 D. L. Wills
 H. M. V. Wilsdon
 A. D. Wilson
 Mrs E. Wiltshire
 D. Wisker (DWr)
 P. Witham (PWm)
 R. S. Wolstenholme
 A. W. Wood
 J. A. Woodley
 J. Woolley (JWy)
 B. Wright (BWr)
 G. W. Wright (GWWr)
 S. J. Wright
 T. Wyatt
- D. F. Yates
 P. E. Yates
 Mrs H. S. Young
 R. A. Young

Birds of the London Area, 1984

with Additions and Corrections for previous years

A REPORT OF THE BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES
OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

The classification of species in this report is that adopted by K. H. Voous in his *List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species* (reprinted 1977 from *Ibis* 115: 612-38 and *Ibis* 119: 223-50, 376-406). Sequence and nomenclature follow the 'British Birds' *List of Birds of the Western Palearctic* (1978).

For recording purposes all species have been given numbers, with suffix letters for subspecies, but it should be noted that this numbering has no significance outside the London Area.

Observers' initials in the report are shown against principal records. A full list of observers appears on pages 12, 13 and 14. The abbreviation 'mo' used for long-stay records indicates 'many observers'.

The six counties within the London Area are signified by initials in the report: E = Essex, H = Hertfordshire, M = Middlesex, B = Buckinghamshire, K = Kent and S = Surrey. Inner London records are normally under the respective counties (Middlesex and Surrey), but abbreviated as 'IL' in tables. For direction of flight, cardinal points are shortened to N, NE, NNE, etc. other abbreviations are: Res. = reservoir, G.P. = gravel pit, N.R. = nature reserve, S.P. = sand pit, S.F. = sewage farm or works, and *Lond. Bird Rep.* or *LBR* = *London Bird Report*.

For a full appreciation of many of the records in this report, a detailed map of the London Area will be found useful. Reference should also be made to the Society's books *Birds of the London Area* (1957 and 1964) and *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the London Area* (1977), which gave the continuous history of species from 1900. A complete London Area Checklist (1901-77) appears in *London Bird Report* 43 : 71-84.

The histograms, which appear in the systematic list, are composed of individual records of each species (i.e. individual arrivals) and do not reflect the length of stay of any birds which would only distort the patterns for the peak time of arrival. Sightings of more than one bird (where they are known to have arrived together) are only included as one record since this would also introduce distortions. Each histogram is based on seven-day periods throughout the year to eliminate any effects of weekend observer bias.

All running totals of rare or unusual birds that are provided in the systematic list can be assumed to refer only to the present century, unless stated otherwise.

1 Red-throated Diver

- S Lonsdale Road Res., a heavily oiled bird on Jan. 3rd flew off in the direction of Barn Elms Res. (PEY), where it was later found on the same day grounded on the reservoir bank, but subsequently vanished during heavy rain (PJS, JPPW, PEY).

3 Great Northern Diver

- M Wraysbury Res., one on Dec. 4th (GMH).
B Queen Mother Res., one from Dec. 4th to 8th (GMH), the same bird as at Wraysbury Res.

- S Barn Elms Res., the bird first seen on Dec. 21st 1983 remained until Jan. 19th (mo). Island Barn Res., an immature on Dec. 1st (ML *et al.*), was still present at the end of the year. On Dec. 23rd it was seen flying in the direction of Queen Elizabeth II Res., where it apparently landed (DPB).

Wintering divers in the London Area will readily move from one water to another, especially when disturbed by weekend yachtsmen. Even so, the Island Barn bird seems to have been remarkably tolerant.

6 Little Grebe

Breeding distribution (number of pairs, or broods, in brackets), largest counts, and Inner London records are given below.

- E Berwick Ponds (3). Epping Forest (1). Fairlop G.P. (2). Hornchurch (2). Netherhall G.P. (5). Rainham G.P. (2). Rainham Marsh (1). Valentines Park (1). West Thurrock (3). Purfleet, 15 on Dec. 8th.
- H Amwell G.P. (4). Cheshunt G.P. (4). Hilfield Park Res. (1). Rye Meads S.F. (5). Slipe Lane G.P. (2). Stanstead Abbots G.P. (2). Tyttenhanger G.P. (4). Hilfield Park Res., 30 on Sept. 22nd. Rye Meads S.F., 20 on Sept. 1st.
- M Brent Res. (5). Broadwater G.P. (1). Perry Oaks S.F. (2). Queen Mary G.P. (2). Yiewsley Fisheries (1). Brent Res., 17 on Sept. 19th and Oct. 19th. Perry Oaks S.F., 14 on Sept. 6th. Kempton Park Res., 33 on Mar. 11th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, singles on Jan. 7th, Jan. 17th, Feb. 4th and Feb. 9th (HB, EW). St. James's Park, following successful breeding here in 1983, birds were present in the early part of the year and at least two pairs in the spring. Both pairs built nests, and whilst the result of one is not known, the other hatched one young after two unsuccessful attempts; two remained to the end of the year (HB, APGG *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., 22 on Mar. 17th.
- K Beckenham (1). Bromley (3). Littlebrook Nature Park (2). Ruxley G.P. (1). Littlebrook Nature Park, 33 on Feb. 13th. Ruxley G.P., 27 on Nov. 4th.
- S Beddington Park (1). Bookham Common (1). Epsom Great Pond (3). Esher Black Pond (2). Holmethorpe S.P. (2). Lonsdale Road Res. (1). Waddon Ponds (1).

7 Great Crested Grebe

Breeding pairs were reported as follows:

	Essex	Herts.	Middx.	Inner London	Bucks.	Kent	Surrey	Total
1983	46	58	48	14	-	5	19	190
1984	40	46	75	14	3	13	23	214

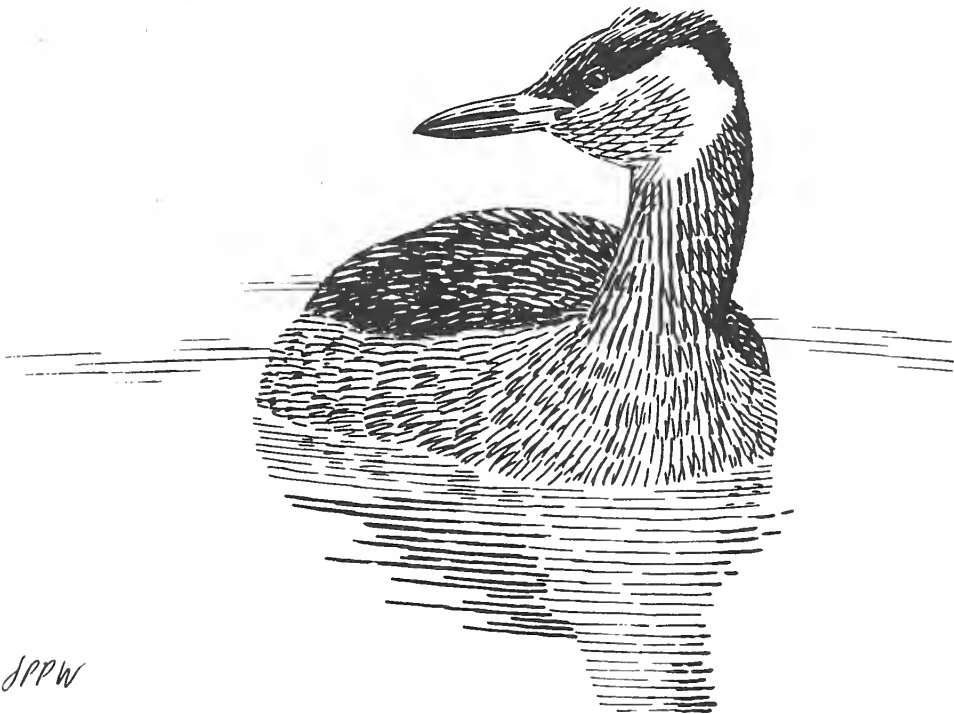
An unprecedented total of 75 breeding pairs in Middx. is a new record. The general upward trend continues, with pairs occupying every available breeding habitat including the non-tidal reaches of the River Thames.

In the summary below, concentrations of ten or more breeding pairs are given, with all Inner London breeding records, and large winter counts in excess of 100 birds.

- E King George V Res., monthly maxima 155 on Sept. 22nd, 255 on Oct. 13th and 240 on Nov. 10th.
- H Cheshunt G.P., at least 14 broods.

- M Brent Res., 32 pairs bred, the highest number ever, rearing 40-50 young. Broadwater G.P., 107 on Jan. 22nd. Queen Mary Res., monthly maxima c.100 on Feb. 12th, 208 on July 22nd, 620 on Aug. 29th, 415 on Sept. 1st, 211 on Oct. 14th, 209 on Nov. 18th and 229 on Dec. 16th. Staines Res., 133 on July 1st. Inner London breeding in Hyde Park (Serpentine, one pair), Kensington Gardens (three pairs on Longwater), Regent's Park (six pairs on lake), St. James's Park (two pairs on lake, a first breeding record for this locality), and Victoria Park (one pair on lake).
- B Wraysbury G.P., 103 on Sept. 16th and 101 on Dec. 16th.
- K No counts exceeded 100 birds.
- S Inner London breeding: Surrey Docks (one pair), but no reports were received from Battersea Park lake where the species bred in 1983.

8 Red-necked Grebe



- E Walthamstow Res., one from Dec. 15th until the end of the year (JF).
- M Queen Mary Res., one in summer plumage from Apr. 13th to May 5th (TJD, JAS, MJW *et al.*) could well have been the Barn Elms Res. bird (see below). Ruislip Lido, one on Nov. 24th (RDNHS). Staines Res., a late moulting juvenile on Nov. 4th (RBH *et al.*), later moved to Queen Mother Res. Stoke Newington Res., one on Dec. 1st (SB).
- B Queen Mother Res., the young bird first seen at Staines Res. was found here on Nov. 8th (GMH) where it stayed until the end of the year; a second bird was with it on Dec. 8th (AVM, PN, RJS *et al.*).
- S Barn Elms Res., the bird first seen on Nov. 29th 1983 stayed until Mar. 4th (mo), although what was probably the same bird, in summer plumage, was present again on Mar. 27th, 28th and Apr. 7th (RBH, NPS). During the latter part of the year, another was present from Nov. 25th (BPA, RJS) into 1985. Holmethorpe S.P., one from Feb. 5th to Mar. 14th (JDF *et al.*). Queen Elizabeth II Res., one on Mar. 18th (DG, CO).

Ten records in one year is a good total, in the absence of any obvious winter influxes, although some birds may have appeared at several localities.

9 Slavonian Grebe

- E King George V Res., one from Sept. 29th was joined by a second on Nov. 10th, one remaining until Nov. 24th (JF). Netherhall G.P., one on Sept. 26th (AG).
- H Hampermill Lake, one on Jan. 29th (RAY), and two from Feb. 5th to Mar. 1st (MG, SCMR, ART). Stocker's Lake, one on Mar. 3rd (AHJD, SD, AVM).
- M Staines Res., singles on Mar. 10th (mo) and Oct. 6th (RJS *et al.*). Stoke Newington Res., one on Feb. 29th (DCL).
- B Queen Mother Res., one on Dec. 1st (GMH, PN *et al.*).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Dec. 1st (BPA, RBH, JPPW).

10 Black-necked Grebe

- E Fairlop G.P., one on Apr. 29th (CGN). King George V Res., one on Aug. 31st, two on Sept. 18th and 29th (JF). Wm. Girling Res., five were present from January to Apr. 1st, two remaining until Apr. 7th; at the end of the year, there were three on Sept. 30th and Oct. 13th, four on Nov. 10th, and three in December (JF).
- M Brent Res., one on Sept. 13th (RB). Kempton Park Res., one on Dec. 26th (SMLW). King George VI Res., eight on Mar. 17th and 18th, nine on Mar. 31st, and three on Apr. 7th and 8th (AVM, PN); three on Sept. 16th and one on Oct. 14th (PN). Ponders End G.P., one from Nov. 18th to 24th, probably from Wm. Girling Res. (PJV). Queen Mary Res., one on five dates between Jan. 4th and 29th (IGJ *et al.*) and singles on Nov. 18th and Dec. 16th (DJMS). Staines Res., one on Jan. 30th, increasing to three in February and early March; main spring passage between Mar. 10th and Apr. 18th (mo), with a maximum of nine on Apr. 7th (MJW), and a late bird on May 4th (JAH, PN). In autumn present from July 1st, building up to eight on July 31st, 26 on Aug. 14th, 16 on Sept. 1st, but numbers then declining rapidly as the north basin was drained, with three still present on Oct. 5th, one remaining until Nov. 18th (mo). Wraysbury Res., singles on Sept. 19th (TJD) and Oct. 1st (CDRH).
- S Holmethorpe S.P., one on Feb. 14th (CKD, POD, RHBF). Island Barn Res., up to three in January, two on Feb. 11th and Mar. 11th and singles on Sept. 17th, 22nd, and Dec. 2nd (RBH, RJH, ML, MT).

Regular wintering continues at Wm. Girling and Island Barn Reservoirs. Otherwise mainly a double passage migrant, with remarkably consistent spring peaks at Staines Res. in late March and early April. Autumn passage here was again disrupted by drainage of the north basin in early September, after high numbers had built up by mid-August.

18 Manx Shearwater

- M Rayners Lane, one found in a suburban garden on Sept. 5th was taken to the RSPB at Sandy, where its return to the coast was arranged (*per* DBR). Wraysbury Res., one on Sept. 1st (AVM, PN *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., one found dead on July 29th (TJD).
- S Island Barn Res., one on Aug. 17th (ML *et al.*), showed the characteristics of the West Mediterranean race *P. p. mauretanicus*, — the Balearic Shearwater.

Two typical records from Middlesex, the second ever July record for

London in Bucks., and an outstanding record from Surrey. Reports of a 'brown shearwater' at Island Barn on a sunny day in August created a considerable stir at the time. The bird in fact proved to be of this distinctively plumaged race of the Manx Shearwater. Although regular in small numbers off British coasts in summer and autumn, the Balearic Shearwater is an extreme rarity inland, and likely to remain so. Further details on p. 132.

23 Leach's Petrel

E/H Cheshunt G.P., one on Nov. 25th, flew S in the direction of Waltham Abbey (RBH, JM TRn).

A return to its more normal status after the 12 in 1983, this bird was found in the wake of gales two days previously.

26 Cormorant

The largest counts, and a summary of Inner London records are given.

E Fishers Green, 135 on Apr. 4th and 165 on Nov. 24th. Walthamstow Res., 150 on Feb. 10th and 232 on Dec. 26th.

H Cheshunt G.P., 37 on Mar. 17th. Rye Meads S.F., 35 on Dec. 2nd.

M Broadwater G.P., 130 on Jan. 4th and 140 on Dec. 26th. Wraysbury Res., 84 on Jan. 29th and 141 on Sept. 16th. Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Nov. 20th. St. James's Park, one on Dec. 13th.

B Queen Mother Res., 40 on Jan. 29th and Nov. 11th. Wraysbury G.P., 22 on Aug. 16th.

K Mostly seen along the River Thames, with up to 20 at Thamesmead between January and March.

S Barn Elms Res., 58 in March and 148 on Dec. 19th. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 107 on Mar. 18th and 290 on Dec. 9th. Inner London: widely reported in small numbers along the River Thames, maximum of five at Battersea Power Station on Jan. 13th, and up to five off Lambeth at the beginning of the year.

If peak counts at winter roosts and other favourite feeding localities are a guide, numbers continue to increase dramatically. Of note was a ringed bird found dead at Walthamstow Res. on Aug. 1st. It had been ringed at Anglesey, north Wales, on July 11th 1983. This matches previous ringing recoveries of Welsh birds in London, and gives a clear indication of the origin of these birds. Also of great interest, was the sighting of a single bird building and occupying a nest at Stocker's Lake between Mar. 24th and Apr. 18th. Inland nesting is still extremely rare in Britain, although fairly common in Ireland and well known on the Continent. The first attempt at inland nesting in Britain was during 1947 in Kent (unsuccessful), however, rather unexpectedly, two colonies arose simultaneously in 1981 in Staffordshire and at Abberton Res., Essex. The latter colony had expanded to 46 pairs by 1983; London's first colony may not be far away, there is certainly plenty of suitable habitat.

27 Shag

E Holyfield Marsh G.P., one from Feb. 18th to 20th (GJW). Nazeing G.P., one on Nov. 6th (GJW). West Thurrock, one on Jan. 3rd (MKD).

H Amwell G.P., an immature on Feb. 11th (GJW). Cheshunt G.P., two on Feb. 10th (MJO), and one on 11th (JGct). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Feb. 4th and 5th (HPM, RNS).

- M Queen Mary Res., an adult on Oct. 23rd (GAR). Wraysbury Res., up to three adults between Feb. 16th and Mar. 18th (GMH, PN *et al.*). Inner London: Hyde Park, one on the Serpentine from Jan. 1st to Mar. 13th (EW). King's Cross area, slightly oiled bird on the Regent's Canal between York Way and Caledonia Road from Feb. 12th to Mar. 25th, had been ringed as a nestling on the Isle of May on June 2nd 1982; it was later found on the same stretch of canal several miles to the east, at Victoria Park, on May 15th (IWG). Regent's Park, one on Nov. 26th (TRDt).
- B Queen Mother Res., three adults on Jan. 29th (AVM, PN), probably then moved to Wraysbury Res. Tilehouse North G.P., an immature from Dec. 29th was still present in January 1985 (ART).
- S Inner London: all records are from the River Thames. Battersea Park, five on Mar. 11th, and one still present on May 25th (RBH); there were also unconfirmed reports of up to six perchings on buoys at this site from late January. Blackfriars Bridge, two flying downstream on Mar. 23rd (DJB). Westminster, one on Jan. 6th, up to two between Feb. 27th and Mar. 20th, and one as late as June 18th, all immatures perching on buoys (PJS). St. John's Wharf, Wapping, one on Mar. 2nd (MJM).

The influx in the early part of the year followed January gales. Many others were reported inland in the home counties at the time. Clearly several came up the River Thames from the east, and remained in the heart of Inner London for several months.

30 Bittern

- H Cheshunt G.P., one on Nov. 17th (RL). Rye Meads S.F. and Stanstead Abbots G.P., one from Dec. 23rd 1983 until Mar. 23rd (LVPG, RMRG). Stocker's Lake, the bird first seen on Dec. 23rd 1983 was present again between Jan. 4th and 27th (TRD, JE, ART *et al.*).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Oct. 6th (DRH).

1983 Correction

- H The record from Amwell G.P. should be deleted. It in fact refers to the already published record from 1982.

33 Night Heron

1983 Correction

This constituted the fifth London record, and not the sixth as stated.

39 Grey Heron

Breeding records, and the highest counts in each sector are given. Once again, no counts were received for the Kempton Park heronry, although it was known to be occupied.

- E Waltham Abbey, 26 occupied nests (TGL). Walthamstow Res., 115 occupied nests, four more than in 1983 (AJGY). West Thurrock, 80 on Mar. 18th (MKD).
- H Stocker's Lake, a further increase to ten nests, with 12 young raised (DC, MJE). No counts higher than 17 were received.
- M Broadwater G.P., 33 pairs bred, an increase from 22 in 1983 (JE). Staines Res., 25 on Oct. 1st (GAR). Inner London: Regent's Park, bred, exact number of pairs not given (DJM).
- K No counts exceeded 12.
- S Gatton Park, eight pairs bred successfully (DAC, FMK). River Wandle, near Watermeads, one pair probably bred (DAC).

40 Purple Heron

- B Wraysbury G.P., an adult was watched for an hour on May 15th as it stalked around a small and rather sparsely vegetated gravel pit (CDRH).

This is the 14th record for the London Area; the last five records have all been in the spring.

46 Mute Swan

The number of pairs reported nesting are shown below:

	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Herts.</i>	<i>Middx.</i>	<i>Inner London</i>	<i>Bucks.</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Surey</i>	<i>Total</i>
1983	7	15	23	1	2	2	20	70
1984	8	13	7	0	2	5	14	49

It is possible that not all breeding pairs were reported by observers. On the other hand, the apparent decrease in the nesting population may reflect the effects of lead poisoning. For the first time for many years, no breeding pairs were reported from Inner London. Recorded data were too incomplete to analyse breeding-success rate.

Largest counts for each sector are given below:

- E Walthamstow Res., a maximum of 40 from April to June.
 H Cheshunt G.P., up to 26 from September to December. Stocker's Lake, 32 on Aug. 16th.
 M Queen Mary Res., 62 on July 18th.
 K River Thames at Greenwich, 24 on June 24th and 23 on Sept. 23rd, a decrease on the previous years' counts in this reach.
 S Walton Res., maxima of 35 on Sept. 25th and 63 on Nov. 18th.

47 Bewick's Swan

- E Fishers Green, one on Jan. 2nd (JF), had been present since Nov. 25th 1983.
 M Bushy Park, a flock of 35 flew E on Mar. 4th (NM, SM). Staines Res., six adults on Nov. 17th (IGJ).

48 Whooper Swan

See also Appendix I

- H Rye Meads S.F., three flew over on Feb. 12th (TWG).

49 Bean Goose

See also Appendix I

1982 Additional Record

- M Staines Moor, 11 on Jan. 16th (SJD, SPJ).

These birds must be free of any doubt regarding their wild origin. As with what were considered wild birds in the past, this record followed a severe spell of winter weather on the Continent. The size of the flock would also suggest they were wild birds rather than escapes.

51 White-fronted Goose

- M Staines, c.40 flew NW over the town on Dec. 13th (MJW). Queen Mary Res., two flew SW on Nov. 9th (NPS).
 S Beddington S.F., 36 flew NW on Feb. 1st (GMH, GDJM). Kew Gardens, c.70 flew W on Jan. 9th (RBH).

Four flocks of overflying geese that were identified. It seems that few wild geese ever alight on the ground in London when the weather is mild.

53 Greylag Goose

Several distinct feral populations exist in the London Area, and all seem to be on the increase. All breeding records, together with the largest counts are given. Odd singles and small parties were seen at many other localities. Apparent hybrids with Canada Goose were also noted.

- E Walthamstow Res., two pairs bred.
- H/M In the Colne Valley, one pair bred at Stocker's Lake, and five pairs in the Broadwater/Moorhall G.P. area. Highest count was at Broadwater G.P., 97 on Aug. 27th (IGJ), a record count for this site.
- M Inner London: St. James's Park, at least five pairs bred, and there were up to 69 in August (PJO).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., bred; 19 young on May 28th. Peak count here was 548 on Oct. 1st (JT, RHT).
- S Gatton Park, three pairs bred raising seven young; 18 on July 8th (DAC).

55 Canada Goose

Following the 1983 LNHS survey, the number of breeding pairs reported in 1984 was well down, doubtless due to much less coverage being achieved. In fact no such decline is likely, and it remains extremely common throughout the Area. The highest breeding concentrations, together with the largest flocks reported, are given. A paper discussing the results of the 1983 LNHS Survey appears on pages 111 to 126.

- E Amwell G.P., 650 on Sept. 5th. Fishers Green, 18 broods, and up to 250 birds in June. Walthamstow Res., 38 broods, with 400 in June.
- H Hampermill Lake, 220 on Nov. 7th. Stanstead Abbots G.P., 11 broods. Stocker's Lake, 78 young in May. Tolpits G.P., 250 on Nov. 3rd.
- M Gunnersbury Park, seven pairs bred. Moorhall G.P., 73 young on May 23rd, and a flock of 350 on July 8th. Osterley Park, six pairs raised 34 young. Queen Mary G.P., 400 on Aug. 14th. Staines Res., 320 on Nov. 5th. Inner London: St. James's Park, at least seven broods.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 231 on Oct. 14th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., 245 on Sept. 13th.
- S Buckland S.P., six pairs bred. Gatton Park, 35 young. Holmethorpe S.P., five pairs bred; 368 on Sept. 16th. Walton Bridge, c.400 in fields near the River Thames on Jan. 11th.

57 Brent Goose

See also Appendix I

- E Rainham Marsh, 21 flew W on Oct. 10th (PAB).
- M Queen Mary Res., 42 flew SW, and then six circled and left to the E on Nov. 9th (NPS). Staines Res., one on Mar. 31st (GMH); a bird present from Oct. 27th to Nov. 23rd (RBH, AVM *et al.*) showed the characters of the North American and east Siberian race, *B.b.nigricans*, colloquially known as 'Black Brant'.
- K River Thames at Woolwich/Thamesmead, one on Feb. 29th (PEH).

S Queen Elizabeth II Res., three on Dec. 16th (DG, CO).

The record of the Black Brant at Staines Res. has been accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee. This distinctive race of the Brent Goose which breeds in Arctic Canada into east Siberia, has never before been recorded in the London Area. Nearly all previous records in Western Europe have been coastal birds associating with the two races of Brent Goose which regularly winter on this side of the Atlantic. A lone bird inland, associating with Canada Geese, looks very suspicious indeed; although the date of arrival fits the pattern of genuinely wild coastal birds. For further details of past occurrences, and a discussion about escape possibilities, see *British Birds* 77: 458-65.

Wild Goose *sp.*

This new category will include the sightings of wild geese in the London Area which have not been identified, often because they are flying over. Observers need to rule out both feral Greylag and Canada Geese before records will be published under this heading.

M/S Inner London: on Jan. 30th a party of between 100 and 120 geese flew SW over the Houses of Parliament and County Hall; they were possibly Brent Geese (PJS).

61 Shelduck

As usual, highest numbers throughout the year were found along the Lower Thames. Inland, although birds were found in every month, the usual influx between February and June was again evident with several pairs breeding at suitable sites. With Staines Res. not drained during the spring and summer, numbers here were considerably lower than they had been during the equivalent period in 1983. All breeding records and the highest counts are given below.

E Bred at Rainham Marsh (three broods) and West Thurrock (one brood). Fairlop G.P., four pairs in the spring may have bred, but no young were seen. Monthly maxima for two sites along the River Thames are given, although few counts were made in the second half of the year.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marsh	160	160	180	100	80	106	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Thurrock	220	—	200	70	43	—	—	—	16	—	—	—

At Barking there were 145 on Jan. 22nd. Wm. Girling Res., 18 flew S on Aug. 4th.

H Pairs were present in the Lea Valley in the spring, and may have attempted to breed at Rye Meads S.F. Cole Green, 14 flew over on Sept. 2nd.

M Queen Mary G.P., two pairs present, and at least one brood seen. Highest monthly counts at Staines Res. and Perry Oaks S.F. are shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Perry Oaks S.F.	—	8	18	4	21	3	1	3	—	—	—	—
Staines Res.	4	6	13	25	17	2	—	—	5	2	3	12

There were also up to 14 at King George VI Res. in March, and 11 at Wraysbury Res. on Feb. 16th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on Jan. 9th (ADLL).

B Wraysbury G.P., one brood seen, although the nest may have been on the banks of Wraysbury Res.

- K Pairs may have bred at Woolwich and Crossness. Along the River Thames at Woolwich, there were 172 on Jan. 10th, 107 on Apr. 10th, 46 on May 23rd, 110 on Sept. 10th and 63 in October and November. Highest counts elsewhere were: Dartford Marsh, 40 on Feb. 4th, Swanscombe Marsh, 20 on Feb. 13th and Thamesmead, 30 on Jan. 22nd.
- S Walton Res., one pair bred, the first breeding record from here. Pairs were seen in April or May at Beddington S.F., Field Common, Hershams, and Hershams S.F.

63 Mandarin

A widespread breeding species in Surrey, mainly in the valleys of the rivers Bourne, Mole and Wey — although few records were received from here. It also now seems well established in Epping Forest. Breeding records are given, together with a summary of other records. Odd singles may refer to escapes from wildfowl collections, rather than part of the feral population.

- E Epping Forest, four pairs in June, one with young (EFCC); 28 on Oct. 7th (PJC) and 20 on Dec. 7th (MKD). Also one at Holyfield Marsh G.P. in November.
- H Singles at Amwell G.P., Bowyers G.P. and Cheshunt G.P. (mo). Theobalds Park, a pair on Apr. 13th (ADW).
- M Singles at Alexandra Park and Queen Mary Res.
- B Horton G.P., two in February. Wraysbury G.P., maxima of eight on Jan. 2nd, and seven on Oct. 28th (AVM *et al.*).
- K Singles at Chislehurst Pond, Beckenham, and Thamesmead.
- S Pairs reported breeding at Bookham Common (DAB, LM), Barwell Court Farm Lake, Chessington (SDBWS), Epsom Great Pond (ESB, SRN, SDBWS), and Wimbledon Common (RHK). Pairs were also noted in the breeding season at Ashted Common, Field Common, Richmond Park, Roseberry Park, and Rye Brook, Leatherhead. Buckland S.P., 40 on Aug. 19th and 25th (ID). Esher, 18 on Feb. 18th (PMN, SMN).

WILDFOWL

Table 1 sets out the usual details, for the five latest seasons, of the indices of the monthly winter wildfowl counts, together with the highest monthly count for each species made in 1984/85. Although indices are no longer published for Smew, the maximum monthly count is given in view of the larger numbers occurring in 1984/85. Also, for the first time, the maximum count is given for Ruddy Duck which occurred in appreciable numbers in January and February 1985.

Table 1. Index of mean winter wildfowl counts 1980/81 to 1984/85 and peak counts for 1984/85 (excluding Lower Thames).

	Indices					Peak Count	
	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85	1984/85	Month
Wigeon	127	141	115	185	510	1,308	Jan
Gadwall	145	162	153	183	190	286	Jan
Teal	138	131	134	145	131	1,136	Oct
Mallard	109	101	87	98	109	2,713	Jan
Showeler	129	151	165	130	107	1,102	Sep
Pochard	82	90	37	70	93	1,705	Jan
Tufted	92	68	41	46	50	3,730	Feb
Goldeneye	110	128	89	98	88	184	Feb
Smew						30	Feb
Goosander	212	260	230	263	397	298	Feb
Ruddy Duck						62	Feb

It should be noted that the peak counts for Teal and Shoveler which fell outside the mid-winter period, are not taken into account when compiling the indices (see *LBR* 47:97 for detailed explanation of methods used).

The severe weather in January, and, especially, February, resulted in greater numbers of several species compared with recent seasons but the aggregate of the peak counts, at about 12,500, was still historically low. Comments on individual species are given, in **bold type**, in the systematic list.

64 Wigeon

1984/85. See Table 1. The index is without precedent, being nearly double the previous maximum which occurred as long ago as 1956/57. This was mainly accounted for by exceptional numbers at King George VI Res. in January and at Kempton Res. in that month and in February.

1984. Largest wintering and passage counts are given, together with two summer occurrences that may relate to birds of feral origin.

- E Rainham Marsh, maxima 28 on Jan. 29th, 40 on Feb. 19th, 50 on Mar. 1st, 23 on Oct. 7th, 13 on Nov. 8th and 33 on Dec. 31st. A small movement through the Lea Valley was recorded in early February at Fishers Green G.P. (14), Wm. Girling Res. (12) and Walthamstow Res. (9).
- H Wintering and passage birds were most frequently observed at Amwell G.P., Cheshunt G.P., Hilfield Park Res. and Stocker's Lake, but no counts in this sector exceeded ten birds.
- M Brent Res., 14 on Apr. 7th. Kempton Park Res., maxima 104 on Jan. 21st, 117 on Feb. 11th and 222 on Mar. 11th. King George VI Res., maxima 91 on Feb. 4th, 48 on Feb. 12th and 29 on Oct. 14th. Queen Mary Res., c.120 flying S on Nov. 9th (see also Walton Res. same date, below); in summer, a drake on June 4th. Staines Res., monthly maxima 102 on Jan. 15th, 35 on Feb. 12th, 22 from Mar. 29th to 31st, five on Apr. 4th, 18 on Sept. 16th, 44 on Oct. 27th, 119 from Nov. 10th to 11th and 171 on Dec. 1st increasing to 218 by 31st.
- B Recorded on autumn passage at Wraysbury G.P. but counts did not exceed ten.
- K River Thames at Dartford, 20 to 23 flying upriver on Dec. 18th and 11 or 12 likewise on 23rd.
- S Barn Elms Res., 15 on Nov. 4th. Beddington S.F., nine flew S on Oct. 6th. Island Barn Res., 23 on Feb. 11th. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 25 on Oct. 14th. Walton Res., monthly maxima 52 on Jan. 23rd, 180 on Feb. 12th, 54 on Oct. 14th and 115 on Nov. 9th. In summer, a drake at Holmethorpe S.P. on May 21st.

67 Gadwall

1984/85. See Table 1. The long-term upward trend continued with a further modest increase to a new maximum.

1984. No nesting was reported, but a few pairs summered. The species is not an indigenous breeder, and it must be remembered that nesting in the last 50 years has been solely the result of introductions and feral escapes. The much larger wintering flocks originate from East Anglia and further east from west Russia.

Summering pairs and largest winter counts are given below. It is

perhaps interesting to note the decrease at Barn Elms Res. in Surrey and the increase at Walton Res.

- E Fishers Green G.P., one pair summered. In winter the largest count for this sector was 28 at Walthamstow Res. on Feb. 20th.
- H Summering was reported at Cheshunt G.P. (one pair), Rye Meads S.F. (one pair) and Stocker's Lake (two pairs). Highest winter counts were in the Lea Valley with maxima of 53 at Rye Meads S.F. on Jan. 1st, 55 at Stanstead Abbots G.P. on Feb. 5th, and up to 35 at Cheshunt G.P. in January and September, rising to 60 in October and 100 in November, but falling to 80 in December.
- M A pair summered at Broadwater G.P., and another pair was reported from Perry Oaks S.F. and Staines Res. on individual dates in May. Highest winter counts came from King George VI Res. with 88 on Jan. 15th, 102 on Feb. 4th and 56 on Mar. 18th, from Queen Mary Res. with c.75 on Jan. 12th and 37 on Mar. 4th, and from Wraysbury Res. with 54 on Jan. 14th, 99 on Feb. 12th and 69 on Mar. 4th. Autumn numbers, in contrast, were abnormally low, with many birds preferring Walton Res. (see Surrey).
- B In this sector the largest winter counts were 58 at Queen Mother Res. on Jan. 29th, 42 at South Iver G.P. on Nov. 18th and c.35 at Wraysbury G.P. in October and November.
- K The only breeding season report was a single at Sevenoaks G.P. on May 28th. Here and elsewhere, most pairs had gone by mid-April. In winter the highest counts were 14 at Priory Gardens, Orpington, in November and December, ten at Ruxley G.P. in December, and c.18 at Sevenoaks G.P. in January and December.
- S There were seven birds at Walton Res. on June 3rd. Far fewer birds were reported at Barn Elms Res., with only 18 in January, nine in February and six in March. Autumn counts were highest at the Walton group of reservoirs, augmented by birds perhaps from the Colne Valley (see Middx.). Island Barn Res., maxima 33 on Jan. 28th and 26 on Feb. 11th. Richmond Park, 25 on Dec. 1st, rising to 44 by end of month. Walton Res., 34 on Jan. 15th, 18 on Feb. 12th, 20 on Sept. 16th, 86 on Oct. 14th, 116 on Nov. 18th, falling to 47 on Dec. 16th. Thorpe Park, 14 on Oct. 19th. Queen Elizabeth II Res., 34 on Mar. 18th.

69 Teal

1984/85. See Table 1. Numbers have now been relatively stable for five seasons.

1984. Two pairs were reported breeding. These and details of other birds present in the breeding season are given below with the largest winter counts.

- E Rainham Marsh, two pairs attempted to breed and a brood from one pair was seen (wv). Winter monthly maxima at Rainham were 900 in January, 400 in February, 1,000 in October, 1,500 in November and 2,000 in December.
- H Pairs or singles were noted on dissociated dates in the breeding season at Kingsmead, Maple Cross S.F. and Stocker's Lake, but no nesting was confirmed at any locality. In winter recorded from a variety of sites but counts seldom exceeded 40 birds. Highest figures were at Cole Green (50 on Nov. 3rd), Hilfield Park Res. (52 on Oct. 13th and Dec. 29th), Maple Cross S.F. (maxima 60 in January and 70 in December) and Rye Meads S.F. (47 on Feb. 19th).

- M A pair was reported at Perry Oaks S.F. on May 8th. Winter monthly maxima at Staines Res. were 242 in January, 385 in February, 130 in March, 312 in September, 300 in October, 221 in November and 214 in December. Elsewhere highest counts were 206 at Kempton Park Res. on Oct. 4th and 200 at Perry Oaks S.F. on Dec. 2nd.
- B In this sector the highest count was 62 at South Iver G.P. on Jan. 15th.
- K A bird was reported in early June at Sevenoaks G.P., where the winter maxima were 59 in February and 50 in December. Along the River Thames, a maximum of 61 at Littlebrook on Jan. 18th and up to 150 at Thamesmead in January and February.
- S Winter monthly maxima at principal localities were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barn Elms Res.	88	117	51	17	15	51	58	127
Queen Elizabeth II Res.	—	59	37	—	80	—	30	47
Walton Res.	—	75	105	—	90	261	43	67

High counts elsewhere notably included 400 at Island Barn Res. in January, associated with flooded fields, falling to 183 in February; 92 at Hogsmill S.F. on Feb. 25th and 100 on Dec. 29th; and 150 at Field Common, Esher on Feb. 15th and 25th.

70 Mallard

1984/85. See Table 1. After the two poorest seasons on record, numbers recovered somewhat, but they are still barely above half the level of the peak reached in the early 1960s.

1984. Counts in excess of 300 are given, together with some Inner London breeding figures and large counts.

- E No count exceeded 212. Numbers were highest at Rainham Marsh and Walthamstow Res.
- H Amwell G.P., 300+ on Nov. 4th. Colne Valley, 300 on Jan. 15th between Bricket Wood and Tyttenhanger. Stanstead Abbots G.P., 420 on Jan. 21st.
- M Brent Res., 12 broods in summer; c.300 on Nov. 17th. Staines Res., 328 on Jan. 15th and 386 on Sept. 16th. Inner London: St. James's Park, at least 16 broods, maximum 212 birds on Aug. 3rd; data for other parks was unavailable. New River Walk, N1, 238 counted on Feb. 22nd.
- B Highest count reported was 180 at Wraysbury G.P. on Nov. 18th.
- K River Thames at Crossness, 430 on Jan. 10th. Away from the River Thames, counts exceeded 100 only at Kelsey Park and Sevenoaks G.P.
- S Gatton Park, c.500 on Jan. 12th, 550 on Sept. 16th and 400 on Oct. 21st.

72 Pintail

All records are given, but summarised for certain localities.

- E Rainham Marsh, monthly maxima of 15 on Jan. 14th, 55 on Mar. 11th, two on Sept. 15th, seven on Oct. 8th and 13th, ten on Nov. 25th and 20 on Dec. 1st (MKD *et al.*).
- H Cheshunt G.P., a pair on Mar. 5th (LVPG). Kingsmead, one on Jan. 28th (BW). Stanstead Abbots G.P., two on Nov. 18th (GJW). Stocker's Lake, one on Jan. 6th (TRD), and two on Mar. 17th (RDNHS).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one or two regularly between Aug. 19th and Sept.

10th (mo). Staines Res., up to nine between Jan. 1st and 15th, two or three from Feb. 18th to 20th, two from Mar. 10th to 18th, one until Mar. 24th; present intermittently from Sept. 4th to the end of the year, with monthly maxima of three on Sept. 18th and 25th, two on several dates in October, eight on Nov. 19th, increasing to ten on Dec. 25th (mo).

- K Crossness, four on Jan. 10th (PJS). Dartford Marsh, two on Dec. 18th (DRG). Sevenoaks G.P., three on Nov. 17th (JT). River Thames at Thamesmead, two on several dates in February (PEh).
 S Beddington S.F., five on Mar. 17th (DAC) and four from Mar. 22nd to 24th (GDJM). Holmethorpe S.P., two on Mar. 25th (JDF).

73 Garganey

All records are given.

- E Holyfield Marsh G.P., one on Apr. 19th (KM).
 E/H A late bird from Nov. 16th to 18th, visited Roydon, Netherhall and Stanstead Abbots G.Ps., and also Rye Meads S.F. (GJW *et al.*).
 H Amwell G.P., one on Aug. 19th (TJ). Maple Cross S.F., singles on Sept. 11th and Oct. 4th (MCRG). Stocker's Lake, a pair from May 8th to 12th (CIB, RRD, MJE).
 M Brent Res., one from Aug. 6th to 12th (LAB, RB). Kempton Park Res., singles on Sept. 9th (JAH, PN), Sept. 12th (RBH), and Sept. 18th (RJS). King George VI Res., one on Sept. 2nd (PN). Perry Oaks S.F., a drake from May 15th to 17th (FRC, JAS *et al.*), two on Aug. 11th (AVM, PN), and one on Aug. 16th (RBH). Staines Res., a drake on May 3rd and 4th (mo), one on Sept. 15th and 16th (RBH *et al.*). Stocker's West G.P., the pair at Stocker's Lake was also seen here on May 12th (MJE).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Aug. 9th (RHT, JT).
 S Holmethorpe S.P., a pair on Apr. 14th (JDF). Richmond Park, a drake on May 28th (BAM). Walton Res., two on Aug. 31st and Sept. 2nd (ML).

Rather more in spring, but fewer in autumn than usual. The November record was only the fourth ever in that month.

74 Blue-winged Teal

- H Stocker's Lake, a female from Apr. 20th to at least the 27th (RRD *et al.*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, and only the second record of this small American duck in the London Area, the first being at Barn Elms Res. as recently as February 1981. A close relative of the Shoveler, this bird spent much of its time in loose association with a small number of this species, and in particular a drake which was actually seen to mate with it on one occasion.

75 Shoveler

1984/85. See Table 1. The long-term upward trend that continued until 1982/83 has now been checked by falls in two consecutive seasons.

1984. Larger counts from each sector are given together with a breeding record and details of summering birds.

- E Holyfield Marsh G.P., one pair summered. King George V Res., 150 on Sept. 7th. Walthamstow Res., one pair bred; the peak count was 115 on Aug. 31st.

- H Broxbourne G.P., 95 on Mar. 4th. Cheshunt G.P., maxima 115 on Mar. 18th, 100 on Oct. 14th and Nov. 17th. Hilfield Park Res., 90 on Oct. 6th. Rye Meads S.F., up to five birds summered. Stocker's Lake, three pairs summered; maximum 60 on Dec. 25th.
- M Brent Res., up to five males in June. King George VI Res., maxima 317 on Jan. 8th, 476 on Nov. 4th and 365 on Nov. 10th. Perry Oaks S.F., maxima 144 on Mar. 13th and c.200 on Dec. 2nd. Queen Mary Res., 396 on Jan. 8th and 621 on Jan. 22nd. Staines Res., maxima 300+ on Oct. 13th, 564 on Sept. 16th and 428 on Oct. 14th. Stain Hill Res., maxima 195 on Jan. 21st and 244 on Feb. 11th. Wraysbury Res., maxima 193 on Feb. 18th and 197 on Dec. 1st. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, between 40 and 50 during January and February and 20 on Oct. 20th. No counts of over 16 were noted elsewhere.
- B Wraysbury G.P., maxima 97 on Feb. 27th and 86 on Mar. 17th.
- K Thamesmead, ten present between February and April.
- S Barn Elms Res., maxima 80 on Jan. 25th, 77 on Feb. 29th and 82 on Mar. 11th. Beddington S.F., a pair on June 3rd. Lonsdale Road Res., maximum 118 on Oct. 18th. Walton Res., maxima 157 on Sept. 16th, 134 on Oct. 14th and 179 on Nov. 18th.

This species proves to be extremely mobile in southwest London, and the largest flocks commute between King George VI, Queen Elizabeth II, Queen Mary and Staines Reservoirs — although precisely what motivates this mobility remains unclear. The total wintering in southwest London probably remains fairly static at around 1,000.

76 Red-crested Pochard

- E Valentines Park, Ilford, one on Apr. 12th (CGN). Wanstead, one on Jan. 9th and from September to December (MDD). West Thurrock, one on Apr. 28th (RBH).
- H Broxbourne G.P., a pair on Apr. 24th (WGL, GJW). Helicon G.P., one on Feb. 28th, Mar. 8th and Apr. 8th (HB, JRB). Hilfield Park Res., singles on June 26th (MJE), and from Aug. 8th to Sept. 16th, with two on Sept. 4th (CIB *et al.*). Stocker's Lake, one on many dates between Feb. 8th and Mar. 12th and one on Sept. 26th (DC, APWH).
- M Hanwell, a pair on the River Brent on Apr. 14th (CL). Ruislip Lido, one on Mar. 6th and 10th (JE, MJG). Staines Res., singles on Sept. 1st (CIB, RJS) and Sept. 26th (RBH).
- K Kelsey Park, Beckenham, one on Aug. 26th (RNK). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Mar. 26th (JT).
- S Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Reservoirs, reported in every month except December, with up to four between January and March, and as many as eight in September (mo). Richmond Park, one on Aug. 6th (HSY) and two on Dec. 31st (AJB). Tooting Bec Common, one on Jan. 4th and 9th (FWL).

Although still published in the main systematic list, few, if any of these records must refer to wild birds. This particularly applies to the flocks in the Barnes area.

77 Pochard

1984/85. See Table 1. After the collapse in numbers in 1982/83 numbers have now recovered to a level in line with those occurring in the early 1970s.

1984. Breeding season records and largest winter counts are given below.

- E Walthamstow Res., seven broods; maximum 216 in December.
 H Rye Meads S.F., two pairs bred. Pynesfield G.P., one pair bred. Stocker's Lake, two pairs bred. Largest count for this sector was 253 at Hilfield Park Res. on Oct. 11th.
 M Alexandra Park, one brood. Brent Res., three broods. At Staines Res. the highest winter counts were 640 on Feb. 4th, 731 on Mar. 18th and 661 on Dec. 16th. Inner London: St. James's Park, at least four broods; no information available for other parks.
 B Wraysbury G.P., maxima 170 on Jan. 22nd and 180+ on Nov. 10th.
 K Highest count in this sector was 118 at Littlebrook on Jan. 18th, though along the River Thames records were generally disappointing.
 S A pair was seen in Richmond Park on May 16th. Largest winter counts were 105 on Feb. 29th at Barn Elms Res. and 258 on Dec. 30th. In contrast, on the Walton group of reservoirs the species was comparatively scarce.

79 Ferruginous Duck

- E Walthamstow Res., the duck first seen on Dec. 31st 1983 remained until Mar. 7th (*pwn et al.*).
 M Little Britain Lake, the drake present in previous winters was found here, or on the nearby Frays River at Cowley Lock, between January and Mar. 25th (mo). Significantly, it was not reported at all in the 1984/85 winter, as far as is known.

The long-staying bird, which was strictly a winter visitor to Little Britain Lake, may well have now been seen for the last time. It spent the last four consecutive winters at this site.

Despite the almost complete lack of published records the recorder suspects that this bird spent most winters at this site, or in the immediate vicinity, since the early 1970s.

80 Tufted Duck

1984/85. See Table 1. Whereas Pochard numbers have improved substantially, the index for this species has increased only modestly since the low season of 1982/83.

1984. The results of a breeding season census are given in a paper on pages 104 to 110; this was based upon counts of adults in May and June and for the purposes of the census no attempt was made to count broods. Set out below are the number of breeding sites and minimum number of broods reported in the normal course of events.

	Essex	Herts.	Middx.	Inner London	Bucks.	Kent	Surrey	Total
1983 broods	63	63	22	26	—	8	8	190
1983 sites	11	9	9	3	—	5	3	40
1984 broods	77	50	20	22	1	4	12	186
1984 sites	8	8	7	1	1	3	4	32

Coverage in the brood season was poorer than in 1983, but in most cases where the same sites were covered in both years, more broods were seen in 1984. Concentrations in excess of ten broods were reported from: (E) Fairlop G.P. — 18; Netherhall G.P. — 12; Walthamstow Res. — 38; (H) Rye Meads S.F. — 20; (IL) St. James's Park — 22.

Counts were again incomplete during the moult period, neither Walton or Staines Res. being covered in August (though there were 730 at the former locality on Sept. 16th and 557 at the latter on July 8th). Nevertheless, over 3,700 were counted in major concentrations

in August as follows: (E) Lea Valley Reservoirs – 1,300; Fairlop G.P. – 176; (M) Broadwater G.P. – 550, the first time a moulting flock has been reported from this water; King George VI Res. – 569; Wraysbury Res. – c.600; (S) Barn Elms Res. – 530. Winter numbers were somewhat improved on 1983 with more sizeable flocks being reported. Counts of over 500 at this season, or sector maxima where less, are given.

- E Walthamstow Res., between 650 and 690 in January, March and December.
- H Rye Meads S.F., 623 in February.
- M Staines Res., 630 in January and 853 in February. Inner London: St. James's Park, 367 in December.
- B Wraysbury G.P., 900 in January, 588 in February and 741 in December.
- K Thamesmead Lakes, 220 and River Thames at Woolwich Arsenal, up to 400, both in January.
- S Barn Elms Res., 302 in January.

81 Scaup

The problem of hybridisation remains. Several female and immature birds seen this year, which in shape, size and plumage seemed to fit this species, appeared to have bill tips on which the black was not confined strictly to the nail only. These records have been held back, pending clarification of this problem. Obviously, close examination of the bills of all suspected Scaup, especially lone birds, is needed.

- E Berwick Ponds, a duck on Sept. 1st (MKD). South Ockendon, a drake on Mar. 26th (RJCK). Wm. Girling Res., a drake from Apr. 28th to May 10th (JF, PJV).
- M Staines Res., a duck from Jan. 7th to Mar. 30th (RMW *et al.*), was joined by a second between Mar. 15th and 21st (IGJ *et al.*).
- S Barn Elms Res., a drake on Nov. 12th (NPS).

Aythya hybrid

- K Ruxley G.P., a drake with a grey back on Mar. 11th (SJG).

82 Eider

- E River Thames at Rainham, a drake on Nov. 18th (MKD).
The 22nd occurrence of this northern sea duck in the London Area, but the first-ever on the Lower Thames.

86 Long-tailed Duck

- E King George V Res., a duck present at the end of 1983 stayed until Feb. 12th (JF).
- H Cheshunt G.P., a duck from Apr. 20th to 26th (MB *et al.*).
- S Holmethorpe S.P., a duck from Oct. 21st to Dec. 9th (PBR, JDF). Island Barn Res., the duck present since Nov. 20th 1983 remained until Feb. 22nd (ML). Walton Res., one (presumably the bird from Island Barn) on Feb. 12th (DG).

87 Common Scoter

- E King George V Res., two on Apr. 7th (JF), singles on June 9th and 10th (PAB, PJV), and Nov. 17th (JF). Roydon G.P., one on Nov. 18th (GJW *et al.*). West Thurrock, five on May 18th (NJI). Wm. Girling Res., singles from Mar. 31st to Apr. 7th (JF, PJV) and on July 1st (PJV).

- H Broxbourne G.P., one on Apr. 13th (WGL). Cheshunt G.P., three on May 15th (HM, ADW). Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 10th (CIB). Stocker's Lake, one on Mar. 1st (GMH).
- M Broadwater and Moorhall G.Ps., a drake from Mar. 11th to 30th (IGJ, AVM *et al.*), was presumably the same as at Stocker's Lake, as both were described as first-summer birds. Broadwater G.P., another two on Mar. 25th (ART). King George VI Res., one from Nov. 4th to 18th (AVM, PN). Queen Mary Res., two on Apr. 8th (AVM, PN), and one on Aug. 5th (RBH). Staines Res., eight on Mar. 12th (IGJ, JAS), 11 on May 4th (mo), singles on Aug. 11th (CIB, AVM, PN) and Sept. 29th (mo). Wraysbury Res., four on Apr. 8th (AVM, PN).
- B Queen Mother Res., five on Apr. 8th (AVM, PN) and three on Nov. 13th (RJS).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Aug. 27th (RHT, JT).
- S Barn Elms Res., singles on Mar. 22nd (RBH, NPS), Apr. 8th (GDJM, NPS) and from Oct. 29th to Nov. 4th (WRS *et al.*). Island Barn Res., one on July 25th (ML).

Reported in every month between March and November, with a very impressive spring movement between March and mid-May, involving some 50 birds. Of interest was the fact that of the 45 in spring, for which details of sex were given, no less than 42 were drakes. In contrast, the scattering of summer and autumn records amounting to about 15 birds included only three adult drakes, although many young birds must be involved in records after August.

89 Velvet Scoter

- B Queen Mother Res., a drake on May 1st (CDRH).
- K Shooters Hill, a female picked up in fog on Dec. 11th was later released at Danson Park on Dec. 15th (*per* RSPCA).

1982 Correction

- B Queen Mother Res., the bird from Jan. 10th to 24th was in fact the same bird as first reported on Dec. 25th 1981, and had not arrived in January as is implied in the text.

This is not the first time a hopelessly disorientated sea duck has been found in odd circumstances in London. The May record is the first during that month in the London Area; 1983 was the first blank year since 1977 and only the fourth in the last 15 years.

91 Goldeneye

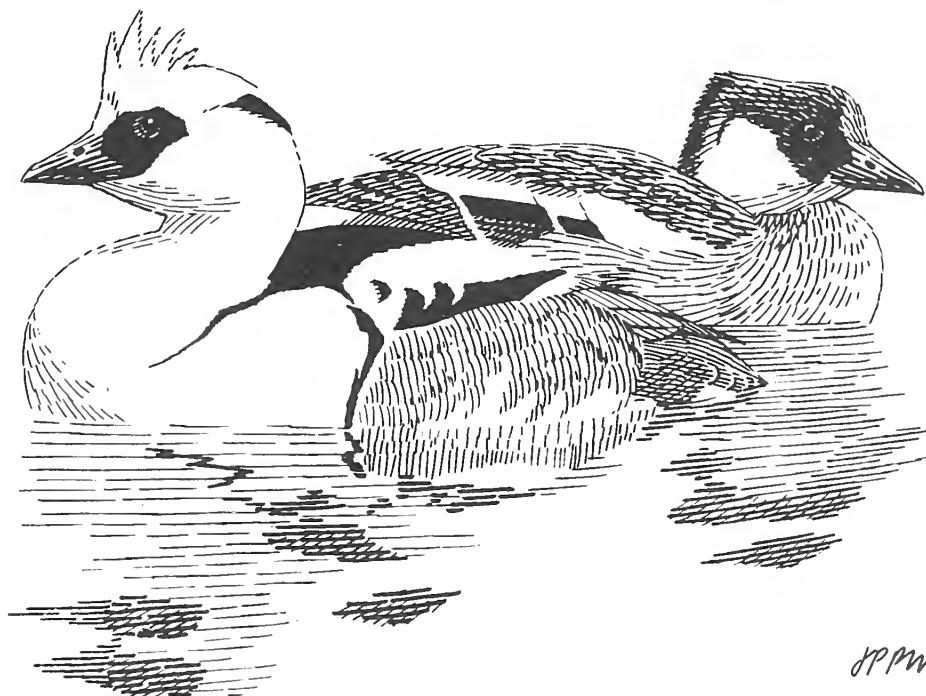
1984/85. See Table 1. The index fell to the lowest level since 1978/79.

1984. Large counts and records of birds summering are given. The count of 127 in the Lea Valley is notable, however, a three-figure count at one locality has never been achieved, despite many 'near misses' in southwest London in recent years.

- E King George V and Wm. Girling Res., 127 in March; three birds summered from May to September (*prv et al.*).
- H Passage and wintering reported from eight localities. Stocker's Lake, the principal wintering site in this sector, maximum 23 on Mar. 4th. Broxbourne G.P., a female on May 16th.
- M Wintering and passage recorded at ten sites. King George VI Res., 94 on Apr. 7th. Queen Mary Res., 56 on Nov. 21st. Staines Res., 39 on Feb. 4th. Wraysbury Res., 44 on Dec. 31st.
- B Wraysbury G.P., maxima 27 on Jan. 15th and 24 on Dec. 16th.

- K** Recorded at Sevenoaks G.P. only, maximum four in November.
S Wintering and passage reported from six localities. Walton Res., 84 on Mar. 18th.

93 Smew



1984/85. See Table 1. Quite a few Smew appeared in the cold weather in January 1985, but the peak count of 30 was in February and involved eight different waters.

1984. A reasonable scattering of records. However, whilst the Essex sector frequently fails to report this species, the absences from the Herts. and Kent sectors are more notable. The last time that these two counties failed to supply any records within our Area was 1978 (Herts.) and 1975 (Kent).

All sites are given, but dates are summarised at the major localities. Records refer to redheads (where known), unless otherwise stated.

- M** Broadwater G.P., one from Jan. 17th to Feb. 10th (IGJ *et al.*). Charlton G.P., two (one drake) on Jan. 29th (AVM,PN). Kempton Park Res., one from Feb. 25th to Mar. 4th (JQ). Queen Mary G.P., two (one drake) from Jan. 14th to 28th (HRG). Queen Mary Res., a drake on Jan. 7th (SDBWS). Wraysbury Res., a drake on Dec. 31st (GMH).
- B** Considerable interchange of birds is known to take place between the following two localities. Horton G.P., birds were present from Jan. 22nd to Mar. 4th with peaks of six (one drake) on Jan. 22nd (RBH), five on Feb. 11th (RW) and six (three drakes) on Feb. 19th (JE); during the latter part of the year one or two were present from Dec. 2nd until Dec. 30th (mo). Wraysbury G.P., present from Jan. 2nd to Mar. 22nd with peaks of five (one drake) on Jan. 18th (RBC), six (one drake) on Feb. 26th (SIJ,PAW) and five (two drakes) on Feb. 29th (RES); during December up to three were present from 1st to 14th (mo) and from then until the end of the year up to five were seen on many dates (mo) with a peak of six (three drakes) on Dec. 30th (AVM,PN).
- S** Richmond Park, one on several dates from Jan. 15th to Mar. 18th;

two from Nov. 21st to 25th and one remaining until the end of December (SDBWS *et al.*). Wimbledon Common, one from Dec. 7th to 14th (RES *et al.*).

94 Red-breasted Merganser

- E King George V Res., one from Nov. 10th to 24th (PJV *et al.*).
 M Queen Mary Res., a late bird on May 5th (GAR).
 B/H Tilehouse North G.P., an adult drake from Mar. 8th to 14th (IGJ *et al.*).

A regular winter visitor from the coast, but outnumbered this year by Long-tailed Ducks.

95 Goosander

1984/85. See Table 1. The severe weather in 1985 resulted in much increased numbers, the index being the highest since the freeze-up of 1962/63.

1984. Peak monthly counts are given for principal sites. All localities are shown, but records summarised.

- E Holyfield Marsh G.P., six on Jan. 8th. King George V and Wm. Girling Res., maxima 28 in January, 36 in February and March, 16 in April and 30 in December. Nazeing G.P., nine on Mar. 15th.
 H Cheshunt G.P., three on Mar. 18th. Rye Meads S.F., five on Nov. 24th. Slipe Lane G.P., two on Nov. 20th.
 M Bedford Quarry, two on Jan. 15th. Bushy Park, seven on Dec. 5th. Hampton Court Park, ten on Dec. 22nd. King George VI Res., maxima 32 in January, 43 in February, 31 in March, 11 in April and 15 in December. Queen Mary G.P., 20 in January. Queen Mary Res., maxima 32 in January, 58 in February, 31 in March, eight in April, 39 in December. Staines Res., maxima 12 in January, nine in February, eight in March, seven in December. Stanwell Moor G.P., eight on Jan. 29th. Wraysbury Res., 20 on Feb. 18th and on Dec. 16th.
 B Queen Mother Res., six on Mar. 4th. Wraysbury G.P., maxima 18 on Jan. 8th, five on Jan. 14th and seven on Feb. 25th.
 K Sevenoaks G.P., singles on two dates, one present throughout December.
 S Barn Elms Res., singles on three dates, including a late bird on May 1st, and two on Nov. 19th and Dec. 2nd. Island Barn Res., maxima 24 in January, 35 in February, 16 in March and 15 in December. Queen Elizabeth II Res., two on Jan. 15th and four on Feb. 12th. Teddington Lock, one on Sept. 27th. Walton Res., maxima 32 in January, 12 in February and 16 in March.

96 Ruddy Duck

1984/85. See Table 1. There was an initial influx in January 1985 when 44 were counted, but the February peak was nearly 50% higher.

1984. Further increases were noted this year as this species slowly becomes established. It is 20 years since the first London record, but it is now a regular feature amongst wildfowl in the Area. A resident population seems settled in the Colne Valley north of Harefield, where birds were present throughout the year. Three pairs bred in Hertfordshire, close to the site of the 1983 breeding pair in Middlesex. Records were generally quite widespread in west London, but relatively scarce in Essex and Kent. Winter peaks were lower than in some recent years; in mild winters there seems to be

little movement either within, or from outside the Area. Summer and early autumn records have increased noticeably. Records are detailed below, but summarised for certain localities.

- E King George V Res., singles from Aug. 12th to 14th and on Nov. 10th.
- H Aldenham Res., two on Jan. 31st and Feb. 2nd. Bowyers G.P., one from Dec. 30th to 31st. Broxbourne G.P., an immature on Aug. 15th, and one from Nov. 9th to 18th. Cheshunt G.P., singles on Nov. 17th and 18th, and Dec. 15th and 16th. Hilfield Park Res., two from Jan. 22nd to 29th, singles on May 18th and 19th, June 17th, Sept. 30th and Nov. 3rd.
- H/M In the Colne Valley, reported on numerous lakes and gravel pits between Broadwater G.P. and Hampermill Lake, and also at Maple Cross S.F. Three pairs bred successfully in this area. Monthly maxima are given below.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	11	8	5	4	3	6	18	16	10	8	10

- M Brent Res., three from June 30th to July 16th, one until Aug. 16th. Queen Mary Res. and G.P., three on May 7th, one on 12th, three on Aug. 29th and two on Sept. 26th. Staines Res., one from Aug. 26th to Sept. 2nd, two up to Oct. 6th, and one until Oct. 14th. Stain Hill Res., five on Jan. 21st, and three on Feb. 11th. Stoke Newington Res., one on Dec. 8th. Wood Green Res., one on Feb. 19th and 20th. Yiewsley Fisheries, two drakes in May, two on July 27th, and one from Aug. 8th to 13th. Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Feb. 16th (TRDt). St. James's Park, a pair on Oct. 1st, and two pairs on 3rd and 4th (KN). The first, and only other, Inner London record was in 1982.
- B Horton G.P., three on Feb. 12th and two drakes on May 15th. Wraysbury G.P., one on six dates between January and March, a pair on May 3rd, singles on Dec. 9th and 30th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., two on July 20th.
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 19th. Island Barn Res., two on Sept. 25th. Walton Res., one on Aug. 20th.

97 Honey Buzzard

- S Near Oxshott, one on June 18th was disturbed and then watched in flight for several minutes, often being mobbed by crows (MJCd). The 13th London record but only the third mid-summer sighting.

99 Red Kite

1982 Correction

- M The record at Hanworth on Jan. 10th was in fact at Perry Oaks S.F.

103 Marsh Harrier

- E Rainham Marsh, two on Sept. 16th (PAH,RJHn).
- H Stocker's Lake, a female or immature on Sept. 24th (JRB).
- B Wraysbury G.P., a female or immature flew WNW on May 5th (RBH,AVM,PN).

A very typical pattern of occurrences, spring sightings now equal autumn sightings.

104 Hen Harrier

- E Fishers Green, a female on Jan. 21st (GJW). Rainham Marsh, up to three 'ring-tails' from January to March, two on Apr. 14th and one on Apr. 28th (MKD), these sightings may have involved up to four individuals. The first sighting in autumn was on Sept. 17th (MKD) and up to three, including an adult male on Oct. 13th, were present until the end of the year (MKD, RBH).
- H Batlers Green, Radlett, a female or immature flew W on Oct. 30th (JHT).
- K Dartford Marsh, a 'ring-tail' in January and February (DRG, PEH) and during December (DD, AJM, RM, RHT). Swanscombe Marsh, one on Feb. 13th (BMU).

This raptor has made the transition, almost surreptitiously, from its previous status as an uncommon passage/winter migrant in the London Area (only 33 records up to 1979), to its present status as a regular winter visitor at one or two localities. Nowadays it is a familiar sight on the Thames-side marshes in Essex and Kent. About 12 individuals were seen this year.

107 Goshawk

- S Bookham Common, an adult (probably a male) on Aug. 27th was watched soaring briefly before plummeting into the wood (DAB, PCB).

The eighth London record in all, although only the third sighting in the last 24 years. Despite the increase of this fine raptor in England in the last 20 years it shows no sign of being seen more frequently in our Area.

108 Sparrowhawk

1984 provides good evidence of the continuing resurgence of this species; both in terms of sightings and in terms of the totals of breeding pairs this was the best year yet. Although proof of breeding was only obtained in one county (Surrey), this was largely due to the vigilance of one observer — MJCd. It is possible that as many as 50 pairs could be breeding in the Area — even 31 pairs is the highest total for over 30 years.

- E Reported from 13 localities during the year, all but one of the sightings involved single birds. Two of the sightings were in May but the rest were between August and April.
- H Records from 33 localities during the year with birds summering in at least nine areas.
- M Seen at 36 localities during the year, nine of which were during the summer months. Display was seen at three of these sites.
- B Reported from five sites during the year, with birds summering in one area.
- K Reports were received from 15 localities throughout the year with birds summering in six areas, breeding was strongly suspected from two of these sites.
- S As usual the bulk of records were in this county. Approximately 60 localities had sightings during the year. At least 31 pairs successfully raised a minimum of 33 young at 23 sites. In addition birds summered at another 13 localities.

109 Buzzard

H Broxbourne Woods, one on June 3rd (TGJ) and 30th (RBH). Cheshunt G.P., one flew NE on Dec. 1st (GJW). Maple Cross S.F., one on Aug. 8th and 12th (MCRG). Moor Park, one on June 18th (SFP,LP).

M The Ridgeway, Mill Hill, one on Sept. 15th (A. Mullord *per* WAH).
An average year. The June records are the first in this month since 1975.

1983 Correction

The Hertford record on Jan. 26th was in fact a Buzzard *sp.*

Buzzard *sp.*

K High Elms, one on Apr. 19th (NC,DD,RGN). South Bromley, one on May 30th (RTK).

113 Osprey

E Rainham Marsh, one on May 7th (MKD,JMH).

M/H Broadwater G.P., one on May 4th flew N into Herts (IGJ). London Airport, one on May 27th settled on one of the runways for a minute before flying off W (JAS).

S Gatton Lake, one on May 10th (FMK,KDGM).

Four is slightly below the recent yearly average. However this year is the first without autumn records since 1971 — which, coincidentally, was the last blank year in London.

115 Kestrel

All reports of breeding are summarised in the following table:

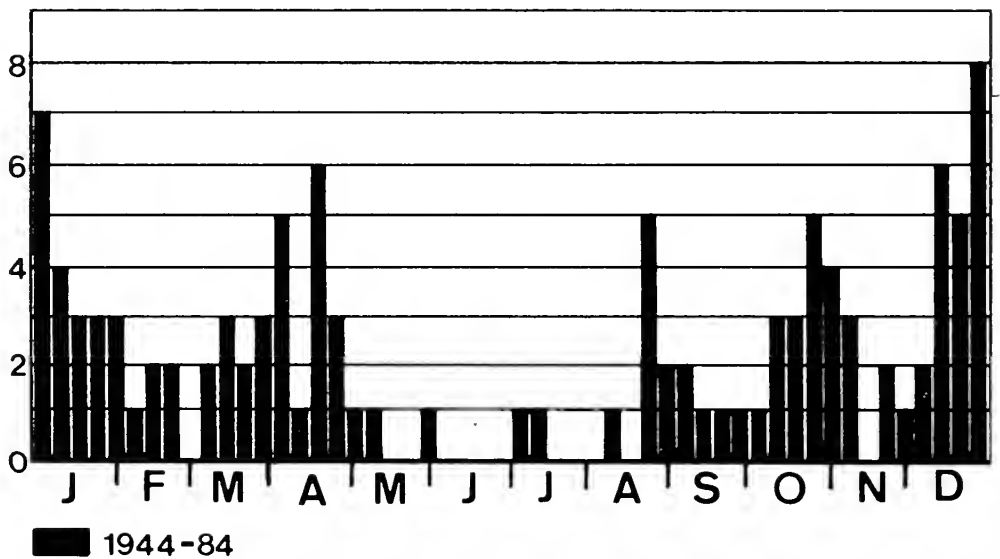
	Essex	Herts.	Mx/Bucks.	Inner London	Kent	Surrey	Total
Proved Breeding	20	1	12	2	6	16	57
Possible Breeding	—	1	8	2	7	3	21
Present	—	—	—	8	—	18	26
							104

The above totals fall well within the fluctuations of previous years although the total of 57 proved breeding pairs is the highest since 1976. The number of pairs reported depends entirely on the vigilance of observers, which clearly varies from year-to-year. The Inner London sightings remain relatively static.

All Inner London breeding season records are given below:

Bankside, one to two from January to July (CGN). Dalston, E8, one over on June 22nd (PAB). Euston Road, NW1, one on July 2nd (RAH). Guy's Hospital, two on June 4th (PJS). Imperial College, two from April to June, no nest was located but they possibly bred nearby (RSKB). Law Courts, WC2, one pair bred (NB). London Bridge, a female on June 25th (PJS). Marylebone British Rail Station, NW1, one pair bred (NB). Regent's Park, present throughout the year (DJM). St. James's Park, one on June 27th (KP). Victoria Station, SW1, one on May 1st and 29th (KP,PJS). Waterloo/Lambeth North Church/St. Thomas's Hospital/Houses of Parliament/County Hall, one to two in all months except August and three on June 12th, but no evidence of breeding (PJS).

118 Merlin



The above histogram includes all records from 1944-84 (111 in all) in the London Area and it illustrates quite neatly spring passage (peaking in mid-April), autumn passage (peaking in late October/early November) and the winter period (birds arriving in early December and peaking at the turn of the year). This year's records were all confined to the late autumn and early winter period.

- E Rainham Marsh, singles on Jan. 4th and 6th and Dec. 29th (MKD, NJI).
 H Rye Meads S.F., a female or immature on Nov. 11th (HPM).
 M Staines Res., a female or immature on Oct. 28th (AVM), Dec. 1st (mo), Dec. 6th (IGJ), and on Dec. 24th (PN); also a male on Nov. 5th (RJH). Warren Farm, Harefield, a female or immature on Jan. 29th (JE). Inner London: Regent's Park, a male flew W on Oct. 15th after arriving from the N (TRDf).
 S Great Stew Pond, Epsom, one on Oct. 23rd was probably a young male (SJH).

This dashing falcon has become much more regular in London during the last six years, but 1984 — even allowing for some duplication of sightings — was a good year with a minimum of eight birds. In fact only 1954 (nine records) and 1956 (ten records) have produced more birds this century. The observations at Staines Res., of a female or immature, between Oct. 28th and the end of year are assumed to involve only one bird since there were known to have been more sightings than the records received might suggest.

119 Hobby

Along with the Hen Harrier, Sparrowhawk and Merlin this falcon is now more regularly seen in our Area than ever before, the number of sightings have continued to increase year-by-year. Although no proof of breeding was received this year several pairs were seen in suitable areas. Records in Essex and Kent still lag behind the other counties.

- E Fishers Green, singles on Apr. 27th and 28th (GJW), and one or two from Sept. 9th to 11th (KM). Netherhall G.P., singles on Aug. 5th and Sept. 10th (HPM, GJW). Romford, one on June 15th (MKD). Walthamstow Res., one on July 11th (GJW). Breeding was suspected in one area.

- H As good a year as in 1983 with sightings from 17 localities and a pair was suspected to have bred in the 1983 site. More significant were the mid-summer sightings in eight localities away from the suspected breeding area. The first sighting was on Apr. 25th at Hilfield Park Res. (CIB) and the last on Sept. 30th at Cheshunt G.P. (GJW,ADW).
- M Records were received from 15 localities, although Staines Res. predominated with seven spring and 18 autumn sightings, the latter including at least three sightings of a juvenile suggesting breeding nearby. The first sighting was of two on Apr. 24th at Staines Res. (MJE) and the last also here on Oct. 6th (BAR). Inner London: Regent's Park, a juvenile on Sept. 17th (TRDt).
- B Wraysbury G.P., singles on Apr. 29th (AVM), May 21st (RGG), two on July 7th (EDt), one on Aug. 23rd and three on Sept. 8th and 13th (RRG,EDt).
- K Bexley, one on Aug. 11th (SJG). Chelsfield, one on Aug. 14th (BRG). Downham, one on May 17th (DD). Hayes, one on Sept. 5th (BRG). Sevenoaks G.P., one on July 22nd and Sept. 16th (JT). Additionally a pair was seen in suitable breeding habitat.
- S Records were received from 14 localities, none in suitable breeding habitat. The first sighting was on May 11th at Barn Elms Res. (RBH) and the last at Island Barn Res. on Oct. 2nd (ML).

1983 Additional Record

- H Cheshunt G.P., one on Oct. 4th (ADW). This record affects the table in *LBR* 48:6.

123 Peregrine

- E Rainham Marsh, singles on Jan. 1st and Dec. 9th (MKD,PAH).
- M Harefield Place G.P., a female on Apr. 8th (DO,ET,RT).
- K Coney Hall, West Wickham, two on July 5th (DRH). Clock House Station, Beckenham, a male on Feb. 22nd (DAC). Elmers End S.F., two on July 6th (GDn,DS). The Elmers End and West Wickham sightings both involved one adult and a possible immature and undoubtedly involved the same birds.

This is the third year in a row and the fifth out of the last seven years that this species has appeared at Rainham Marsh. The two Kent sightings in July are something of a puzzle, but seem unlikely to have involved wild birds.

129 Red-legged Partridge

Pairs reported in the breeding season (totals in brackets) and selected highest county counts are given.

- E Berwick Ponds (1). Dagenham (1). Hainault (10). Nazeing (2). Netherhall (2). Rainham Marsh (2). Roydon (1). Ockendon, 25 on Jan. 28th. Stifford, 25 on Dec. 14th. A record of 50 seen in a pen at Sewardstone on Aug. 27th prior to release may give some indication as to the origin of many birds in this region.
- H Amwell G.P. (2). Broxbourne G.P. (1). London Colney (1). Park Street (1). Rickmansworth (1). Turnford Marsh (1). Tyttenhanger (1). Cooper's Green, 34 on Nov. 11th.
- M Osterley Park (1). No counts above four were noted in this sector.
- B No counts over seven were noted in this sector.
- K Chelsfield (1). No counts over two were noted in this sector.
- S Godstone N.R. (1). No counts over two were noted in this sector.

130 Grey Partridge

Distribution of pairs in the breeding season (totals in brackets) are given along with the highest county counts.

- E Barking (2). Berwick Ponds (3). Fishers Green (1). Hainault (1). Rainham Marsh (3). Waltham Abbey (1). Berwick Ponds, 20 on Aug. 12th.
- H Amwell (1). Brookmans Park (1). Broxbourne (1). Colney Heath (1). Cooper's Green (1). London Colney (3). Park Street (1). Tyttenhanger (3). Cooper's Green, 13 on Oct. 14th.
- M Osterley Park (about 10) and 12 on Jan. 8th. West Drayton, 12 on Jan. 20th.
- B Langley, maxima 21 on Jan. 14th, 18 on Nov. 25th and Dec. 18th.
- K Dartford Marsh (5). Swanscombe (1). Thamesmead/Plumstead Marsh (2). Dartford Marsh, maxima 15 in January and February.
- S Holmethorpe S.P. (1) and a maximum of nine on Apr. 29th.

131 Quail

- H Shepherd's Lane Fields, Rickmansworth, one heard calling frequently between July 1st and 17th (AVM *et al.*). Shortly after this the crop of winter barley was harvested and the bird was not heard again. It is possible that more than one bird was present although the only sighting was on July 16th (RRD). It is unlikely that successful breeding took place.

This record raises the possibility of breeding in our Area again, the last year that they bred successfully was 1974; greater mid-summer vigilance from observers might show it to be more regular.

133 Pheasant

No significant records were received this year and clearly this species is under-recorded.

- H Records from eight localities, although breeding was only recorded from Rye Meads S.F. (2-3 broods) where ten were seen on Dec. 22nd.
- M Records from eight localities; pairs were present at Staines Moor (1), Springwell (1) and Osterley Park (11 females).
- B Records only from Wraysbury G.P.
- K Breeding records were received from Bromley Common (1). Chelsfield (1). Dartford Marsh (several). Elmers End S.F. (1). Swanscombe Marsh (1). Thamesmead (2).
- S No breeding records, but noted at seven localities.

136 Water Rail

Records were received from the usual number of localities. The table below shows that the best three months of the year are November, December and January. All sites of winter occurrence are given (with maximum winter totals in brackets).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sightings	18	20	16	11	1	2	9	13	18
Total birds	36	30	23	13	1	2	20	39	50

- E Berwick Ponds (4). Dagenham Chase (1). Leyton (1). Thorndon Park (1). Walthamstow Marsh (1).
- H Amwell G.P. (1). Cassiobury Park (6). Cheshunt G.P. (13+). Maple Cross S.F. (6). Rye House Marsh (5+). Rye Meads S.F. (8).

Stocker's Lake (3). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one was heard calling in May but not subsequently. The count at Cheshunt would appear to be the highest-ever count in London; the Lea Valley is clearly the most favoured wintering area in London.

- M Alexandra Park (1). Broadwater G.P. (1). Brent Res. (3). Hampstead Heath (1). Hampton Court Park (1) — an exceptionally tame and approachable individual. Little Britain Lake (1). Staines Moor (1). Wood Green Res. (1).
- B Wraysbury G.P. (2)
- K Foots Cray Meadows (2). Hoblingwell Wood (1). Kelsey Park, Beckenham (1). Priory Gardens, Orpington (1). Littlebrook Nature Park (1). Ruxley G.P. (5). Sevenoaks G.P. (2).
- S Beddington S.F. (1). Buckland S.P. (1). Epsom Great Pond (1). Fetcham Mill Pond (1). Godstone (1). Hersham S.F. (1). Richmond Park (2).

142 Moorhen

Large counts and Inner London breeding records are given.

- E Fishers Green, 50 on Dec. 26th.
- H Cheshunt G.P., 90 on Feb. 11th and 60 on Mar. 17th. Hampermill Lakes, 60 in January and February. Maple Cross S.F., 60 in January. Rye Meads S.F., 108 on Jan. 15th and 139 on Feb. 12th. A bird showing characters of a Moorhen/Coot hybrid was present at Hampermill Lakes from Feb. 26th to Mar. 10th (RAY).
- M Little Britain Lake, 50 on Jan. 21st. Inner London: Hyde Park, one pair bred. Kensington Gardens, one pair bred. New River Walk, one pair bred (unsuccessfully). St. James's Park, one pair bred.
- K Littlebrook Nature Park, 34 on Feb. 12th. Lullingstone, 61 on Jan. 15th. Sevenoaks G.P., 40 on Mar. 6th — a very poor breeding season was noted here. A pair at The Tarn, Eltham had two chicks from the first brood and one chick from the second brood killed by a Coot (JW).
- S Beddington S.F., 45 on Jan. 7th and 33 on Jan. 28th.

145 Coot

Sample large counts and the total number of pairs breeding in each sector as well as comparative figures for some Inner London parks are given.

- E West Thurrock, maxima 245 on Jan. 22nd and 227 on Feb. 29th. Walthamstow Res., an albino bird was present from July until the end of the year.
- H Cheshunt G.P., maxima 440 on Jan. 15th, 305 on Sept. 16th, 335 on Oct. 14th, 315 on Nov. 18th and 345 on Dec. 15th. Colne Valley G.P's., maximum 926 on Jan. 14th. Rye Meads S.F., 56 pairs bred. Stocker's Lake, maximum 283 on Jan. 14th.
- M Kempton Park Res., maxima 509 on Jan. 21st and 380 on Feb. 11th. Inner London: Regent's Park, several pairs bred. St. James's Park, at least 19 nests; maxima 153 on Nov. 13th and Dec. 15th.
- B Wraysbury G.P., maxima 500+ on Oct. 20th, 470+ on Oct. 27th, 419 on Nov. 18th and 366 on Dec. 16th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., maxima 205 on Jan. 8th and 250 on Mar. 6th.
- S A total of 74 pairs was noted in this sector. Barn Elms Res., maxima were 250 in January and 200 in September. Richmond Park, maxima 278 on Nov. 27th and 316 on Dec. 30th. Walton Res., maxima 670 on Sept. 25th, 916 on Oct. 14th, 910 on Nov. 18th and 501 on Dec. 16th.

151 Oystercatcher

A good year and, although breeding was not proven in Essex, a pair nested in Kent. All records are given.

- E Chigwell Res., one on Aug. 21st (AB). Grays, three on Apr. 30th (JMH). King George V Res., one on Mar. 11th (PJV). Netherhall G.P., one on May 15th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, up to three in April and May; may have bred (CGN, JMH). West Thurrock, one on Apr. 28th and four on May 6th (RBH), four on May 17th (JMH), 12 on May 19th and one during August (NJI); in addition, one pair may have bred (MKD *et al.*).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one flew S on Jan. 4th (MJH). Rye Meads S.F., one flew over on Aug. 17th (RMRG).
- M Kempton Park Res., one on Aug. 5th (FRC). King George VI Res., one on Aug. 5th (PN). Moorhall G.P., one on May 29th (RJR). Perry Oaks S.F., three on May 18th (JAS). Queen Mary G.P., singles flew W on July 21st, S on Aug. 8th, SW on Aug. 25th, and then two flew S on Aug. 30th (HRG). Springwell, one flew NE on Aug. 26th (HB). Staines Res., one on Feb. 7th (GAR), two on Mar. 17th (EDT, PN), nine on Mar. 18th (RBH, AVM, PN, JAS), then singles on June 17th and Sept. 25th (MP, GAR). Wraysbury Res., three on Aug. 13th (CDRH).
- B Wraysbury G.P., two flew W on May 19th, one on Aug. 4th (RRG).
- K River Thames at Barking/Woolwich, eight flew upriver at 11.38 hrs. on Aug. 13th, then downriver ten minutes later (PJS). River Thames at Crossness/Thamesmead, one pair nested and laid two eggs, but success or otherwise not known (PEH, PJS). Dartford Marsh, one on Mar. 14th (RM). Stone Marsh, a pair on May 6th (RBH). Swanscombe, one on Sept. 30th (BMU).
- S Barn Elms Res., two on Mar. 1st (WRS), and one flying over on May 18th (RBH, JPPW). Holmethorpe S.P., two on June 24th and one on Dec. 9th (JDF).

1982 Additional Record

- B Queen Mother Res., one flying E on Jan. 21st (GMH).

152 Black-winged Stilt

- H Near Watford, two on May 7th were presumably the birds found at Perry Oaks S.F. the following day (PAWS).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., two on May 8th were probably a pair. They remained until the early morning of the 9th, and were last seen flying W at 05.30 hrs. (FRC *et al.*).

A more or less annual vagrant to Britain, mainly in the South, this species quite often turns up in twos and threes, and in fact most of the London records now involve more than one bird, there having been two at Brent Res. in 1918 and two at Epsom in 1955. Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, these two sightings of this elegant wader represent the fifth record for the London Area.

153 Avocet

- H Rye Meads S.F., one on Mar. 24th (RMRG).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one from May 4th to 9th (TJD *et al.*), and another on May 23rd (IGJ, JAS). Staines Res., singles on Apr. 14th (CIB, TJD, PN) and Nov. 13th (IGJ, RJS, JAS), then 13 in the afternoon of Dec. 2nd, when there had been only one in the morning (AVM, PN, GWWT, SJW *et al.*).

S Island Barn Res., seven flew in from the W and out S at 09.00 hrs. on Dec. 2nd (ML).

When the 'Checklist of the Birds of the London Area, 1901-77' was published (*LBR* 43:71-84) there had been 24 records this century. In the subsequent seven years this total has risen to around 66, so by recent standards these seven occurrences represent only a slightly better-than-average year. Notable, however, were the two flocks on Dec. 2nd, which were coincident with other flocks in S.E. England on this date.

158 Little Ringed Plover

Records of pairs in the breeding season are given in the table below.

	<i>Sites</i>	<i>Pairs proved breeding</i>	<i>Other pairs present</i>	<i>Total</i>
Essex	11	16	4	20
Herts.	10	8	8	16
Middx.	6	7	0	7
Bucks.	1	0	1	1
Kent	3	2	3	5
Surrey	6	6	2	8
<i>Totals</i>	37	39	18	57

Of note are two pairs present in Inner London, one either side of the River Thames. The Middlesex pair nested, but the outcome is not known. Assuming similar observer coverage to recent years, the 1984 breeding season was about average in terms of the above totals. Breeding success, though, is very haphazard in London. For example, two pairs at a Surrey site raised at least ten young, while both the Kent pairs had their nests predated. The first birds of the year arrived on Mar. 22nd, when there were singles at Spout Lane Fields, near Stanwell Moor (TJD), and nearby, at Staines Res. (JAS). As usual, the post-breeding build-up peaked in July, with 40 at Rainham Marsh on the 27th (MKD), and 30 at Kempton Park Res. on the 14th (PN). Other good counts were 22 at Perry Oaks S.F. on Aug. 4th (RBH), and 17 at Rye Meads S.F. on July 7th (RMRG). The last of the year were four at Rainham Marsh on Sept. 29th (MKD).

159 Ringed Plover

A good total of probably 27 pairs was reported, with between 14 and 16 of these known to have nested. As usual, early February saw the first potential breeders returning to inland sites, whilst the birds that probably belong to the Arctic populations and which characteristically pass through London in late May/early June only appeared in any numbers at Perry Oaks S.F. The autumn passage peaked at different times at different sites throughout August and September, and though numbers were good at sites along the Lower Thames, those at inland localities were singularly unexceptional. Breeding season records, high counts, and inland winter occurrences are given.

E Berwick Ponds, two pairs, not reported as having bred. King George V Res., one pair present for three weeks in May. Rainham Marsh, between four and six pairs bred; there was an autumn flock of 115 birds on Sept. 22nd, and a very high winter count of 400 on Dec. 8th (a record for this site). West Thurrock, three pairs bred; autumn and winter counts were very good, with a massive 500 on Jan. 29th (a record for the London Area), then 160 on Aug. 25th and 27th, 196 on Sept. 30th, 172 on Oct. 14th, 150 on Nov. 11th, and 75 on Dec. 14th.

H Near Hatfield, one pair bred. Birds were seen in the summer at three

other sites, but none were noted as holding territory. Passage counts were minimal.

- M Brent Res., seven on Aug. 17th. Kempton Park Res., one pair bred successfully; 12 on Aug. 5th. Bizarrely, at London Airport a pair and three newly hatched chicks were all killed by aircraft on July 5th. Perry Oaks S.F., 13 on May 18th and 32 on June 5th; the autumn peak was 20 on Sept. 1st. Queen Mary G.P., one pair bred. Spout Lane Fields, a pair with chicks in late May possibly raised another brood. Staines Res., a pair nested, but were flooded out when the reservoir was refilled; 17 on Sept. 16th.
- B Queen Mother Res., two on Jan. 2nd. Wraysbury G.P., one on Jan. 12th.
- K Crossness, a pair was present in April. Dartford Marsh, two pairs may have bred; 30-40 on Aug. 23rd, 70 on Sept. 25th. Swanscombe, two pairs held territory; 46 on Feb. 13th. Thamesmead, a pair raised three young. Woolwich, possibly three pairs present, though breeding not reported.
- S Beddington S.F., 15 on Sept. 21st, plus a winter record of one on Dec. 26th.

160 Killdeer

- S Beddington S.F., one, probably first-winter, initially seen for five minutes during the afternoon of Jan. 31st, was refound the following morning and watched by a fortunate group of observers before it flew off N at around mid-day (GDJM *et al.*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this highly vociferous individual constitutes the first record for the London Area. Despite the rarity of this Nearctic species in Britain, it is fairly prone to wandering inland, so although unexpected, this addition to the London list is not a complete surprise. A disappointingly brief visit by this striking bird which, had it stayed longer, would undoubtedly have been a major crowd-puller. The date is typical, most British records being between November and April.

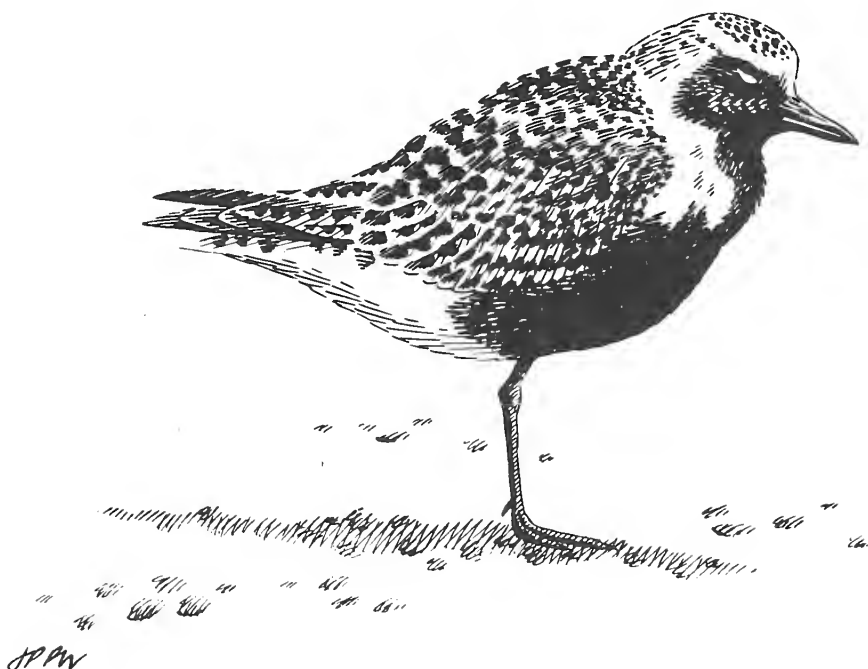
165 Golden Plover

Observed in the first half of the year up to Apr. 22nd, with widespread hard weather movement noted on Jan. 21st and 22nd. There was then an isolated record in mid-May, before autumn sightings began on July 19th, with good numbers building up at the year's end. This is mainly a winter visitor to London, occurring in by far the largest numbers in Essex. Smaller numbers are seen on passage. Only counts in double figures or more are given.

- E Fairlop, 150 in April, then 60 on Nov. 4th rising to 300 on 17th, and up to 580 in December (on 15th) with 500 still present on 31st. Sewardstone, 180 on Jan. 22nd. South Ockendon, 110 on Feb. 13th. Walthamstow Res., 84 on Jan. 22nd.
- H Amwell G.P., 13 flew NW on Jan. 22nd. London Colney, 90 on Nov. 10th. Radlett Aerodrome, 23 on Feb. 26th. Symondshyde, 12 on Jan. 28th, and 70 on Oct. 27th. Tyttenhanger G.P., 75 on Feb. 18th and 87 on 25th.
- M Near Broadwater G.P., c.20 on Jan. 22nd. Osterley Park, 69 on Jan. 22nd. Staines Moor, 30+ on Feb. 19th, 21 on Nov. 21st, 52 on Dec. 16th and 55 on the 18th. Staines Res., c.50 flew SE on Jan. 21st, then in double figures from Nov. 3rd (ten) to the end of the year, with monthly maxima of 32 on Nov. 24th and 55 on Dec. 27th.

- K Chislehurst, 20 flew S on Jan. 21st.
 S Beddington S.F., on Jan. 22nd, 22 were on fields, while c.40 flew SW; additionally, there were 34 on Feb. 19th. Hersham, c.100 on Jan. 22nd.

166 Grey Plover



As usual, mainly seen in the latter halves of the spring and autumn wader movements, plus a scattering of winter records (generally along the Lower Thames). All records are given, except at Staines Res., where autumn records are summarised.

- E Aveley Marshes, six on May 7th (JMH). King George V Res., one on Oct. 9th (PJV). Rainham Marsh, one on Nov. 10th (PL). Walthamstow Res., one on Jan. 19th (PF). West Thurrock, singles noted in January, and on Feb. 9th (JMH), Apr. 28th (RBH), two on May 6th (RBH,AVM) and further singles on May 19th and Sept. 16th (MKD). Wm. Girling Res., singles on May 6th (GJW *et al.*) and 7th (JF).
- M Kempton Park Res., one on May 16th (RBH). Staines Moor, one on Nov. 26th (CL). Staines Res., one on Apr. 21st (RJH,PN,BAR), then in May, singles on 1st, 2nd, 9th and 17th (RBH,IGJ,AVM), and six flying N on May 22nd (MJW); in autumn present from Sept. 15th to Oct. 9th, with a maximum of eight on Sept. 18th and 25th (mo), then two on Nov. 3rd (RJS), and one intermittently from Nov. 28th to Dec. 10th (mo), which was joined by another on Dec. 2nd (AVM,PN).
- B Wraysbury G.P., five on May 22nd (DPB).
- S Barn Elms Res., one flew NE on May 13th (NPS). Beddington S.F., one on Nov. 3rd (GDJM).

The influence which a good site has on this species' occurrence in London is quite remarkable. 28 bird/days this spring compares with 48 at Staines Res. alone in spring 1983, when the north basin was empty; it had largely dried out by August 1983 and consequently produced only one bird in that autumn, with London as a whole only having 15 bird/days in the same period. This autumn, however, Staines Res. was once again in prime condition, and alone amassed 96 bird/days!

169 Lapwing

As in 1983, around 130 breeding pairs were reported. There was a notable hard weather movement on Jan. 21st and 22nd, particularly on the latter date, with most birds heading S or SW. The highest numbers reported were 1,000 at Walthamstow Res., 960 at Rye Meads S.F., and 934 at Barn Elms Res. It is interesting to note that Golden Plovers were heavily involved in this movement as well, though combined flocks of the two species were not reported. Winter numbers were good, and the highest counts are given below.

- E Berwick Ponds, 1,000 on Dec. 15th. Fairlop, 1,000 on Nov. 10th and Dec. 31st.
- H Maple Cross, 2,000 on Feb. 12th. West Hyde, 1,120 on the same date.
- M Staines Res., up to 1,200 (on Nov. 18th) on the drained north basin in the last three months of the year.

170 Knot

- E King George V Res., one on May 27th (JF) and one on Nov. 18th (KM). West Thurrock, 55 flying upriver at 14.40 hrs. on Sept. 2nd (RBH).
- M Brent Res., one on Sept. 8th (RB) and another on the 28th (LAB). Perry Oaks S.F., one from Aug. 15th to 20th (JAS *et al.*). Staines Res., 13 flew in at dusk on Sept. 18th (GMH,AVM,PN); singles were present on Oct. 8th (AVM) and Dec. 16th (IGJ,CL,BAR). Stain Hill Res., two on Aug. 5th (JQ). Wraysbury Res., 11 flew SW at 15.00 hrs. on Sept. 2nd (PN).

Although these 11 records are no more than a reasonably good total by recent standards, the occurrence of three flocks is very notable, particularly the two which appeared on the same date, which certainly involved different birds. The Essex flock is the largest seen on passage in London, since a collection of up to c.250 birds at Swanscombe in late October and November 1960.

171 Sanderling

- E Walthamstow Res., singles on May 10th (AB) and 21st (ADLL), and then four on the 27th (REH). West Thurrock, one on May 18th (NJI). Wm. Girling Res., singles on July 28th (PJV) and Nov. 3rd to 10th (JF).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Nov. 14th (GJW).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., three on June 3rd and four on the 6th (JAS), then a single on Sept. 11th (TJD). Queen Mary Res., a bird present for at least a week from late September was only reported on the 26th and 28th (GMH,AVM,BAR,NPS). Staines Res., single birds from Apr. 27th to 28th (RBH,PN *et al.*), and on May 4th (IGJ) and 6th (mo). Wraysbury Res., one on May 17th (CDRH).
- B Queen Mother Res., one on May 21st (CDRH).
- S Barn Elms Res., a good showing in spring with one on Apr. 27th, three on May 17th, one on 18th, two on 19th and two on 22nd (RBH,TJL,NPS,JPPW).

Generally, an average spring passage, with all birds being on classic dates. Interestingly though, the autumn records were mainly later than is usual in London, where August is perhaps the typical month.

175 Little Stint

There were two spring records, then a good autumn passage from July 24th into early November, with the main influx lasting for about three weeks from mid-September.

- E Rainham Marsh, two on Sept. 29th, and one on Oct. 7th (MKD), then three present the following day (JMH).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Sept. 8th (RNS,GJW). Rye Meads S.F., one from Sept. 20th to 24th (RMRG). Westwood Quarry, one on May 25th (AEG,LEP).
- M Kempton Park Res., after one on Aug. 3rd, there were two on the 5th, then four on the 16th and 17th (CIB,FRC,RBH). Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 18th (JAS), and in autumn one on July 24th (IGJ,JAS), two on Aug. 2nd, three on the 4th (which were all adults) and one on the 5th (CIB,AVM,PN,JAS); finally, the largest gathering of the year in London, 12 on Sept. 30th (GMH), which no doubt consisted largely of birds usually at Staines Res. at this time, where they were present almost continuously from Sept. 8th to Oct. 14th, with maxima of eight on Sept. 17th, 25th and 26th (mo), ten on the 29th (PN,BAR), and nine on Oct. 2nd (CIB), then a final individual from Oct. 25th to 28th (GMH *et al.*). Wraysbury Res., two on Aug. 23rd (CDRH).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 1st (WRS). Beddington S.F., a late bird from Nov. 4th to 10th (SJD,GDJM).

A very poor showing at Rainham Marsh, usually a reliable site for this species. With its north basin drained, Staines Res. undoubtedly became one of the most attractive localities in London for passage waders. However, with Staines Res. normally full, Perry Oaks S.F. due for imminent levelling, and a constant question mark hanging over the well-being of Rainham Marsh, the future for wader-watching in the London Area does appear rather bleak.

176 Temminck's Stint

- E Netherhall G.P., one on May 10th (GJW *et al.*).

This singleton appeared on a classic date, especially as in London spring birds have become nearly twice as frequent as autumn ones in the last ten years. One record, however, is a little below the norm. The second occurrence at this site in three years (with only one day separating the dates) it takes the London Area total to 47 (involving 57 birds).

178 White-rumped Sandpiper

- M Perry Oaks S.F., an adult found on July 30th, although at times elusive, remained until Aug. 12th (RBH *et al.*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the first record for the London Area. Although this is the third most regular Nearctic wader to cross the Atlantic after Pectoral and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, unlike them it is almost never seen inland, so whilst its occurrence here has been anticipated for some time it is not surprising that it has taken so long to materialize.

180 Pectoral Sandpiper

- M Perry Oaks S.F., an adult from July 15th to 24th (AVM,PN *et al.*), and a juvenile from Sept. 1st to 5th (JAS *et al.*). Staines Res., one from Sept. 7th to 12th (AVM,PN *et al.*) is presumed to have been the juvenile from Perry Oaks, but what was probably a different individual from Sept. 17th (GMH *et al.*) was joined by a second bird from 26th to 30th (GMH,BAR *et al.*), one of these two remained until Oct. 8th (mo); finally, another juvenile on Oct. 21st (CIB).
- S Hogsmill S.F., one on Sept. 8th (JG,WRI).

This record crop of six birds brings the London Area total to 35. As is often the case, events in London were a sample of more widespread goings-on. There was a sizeable influx of this species in early September, most obvious in the southwest, with up to six together in Cornwall. It is probably significant that all this year's records appeared in the southwest corner of our Area. It is the second time that two birds have been seen together in London, and as well as being the most in a year, these records include the earliest and (apart from a December bird) the latest ever. The Surrey bird is the first in this part of the London Area since 1956. (See photograph opposite p. 56).

182 Curlew Sandpiper

- E Rainham Marsh, one on July 20th (MKD *per* RET). Stubbers G.P., three on Aug. 19th and Sept. 9th (MJA). Walthamstow Res., one on July 26th (PF).
- M Kempton Park Res., five from Sept. 8th to 10th (AVM,PN *et al.*). Perry Oaks S.F., two on July 27th and 28th, with one remaining on the 29th (IGJ *et al.*), two on Aug. 4th (AVM,PN), and four on the 5th (CIB); finally, three on Sept. 30th (GMH) and three flying N on Oct. 6th (AVM,PN) were probably birds from Staines Res. where the species was present from Sept. 11th to Oct. 11th, usually involving between two and five birds, though there were six on Sept. 21st and 22nd, and again on Oct. 1st and 2nd, and only a singleton on Oct. 10th and 11th (mo); there were three late birds on Nov. 3rd (GMH,RBH).
- S Walton Res., two on Aug. 30th (ML) and one on Sept. 1st (JO).

A good crop of records, all on typical dates, though none was seen in spring. However, considering the availability of suitable habitat this autumn, numbers were rather low, indicative of a lengthy but weak passage with no large influxes.

183 Purple Sandpiper

- M/S Teddington Lock, one, found during the evening of Sept. 9th, was watched the following day until 07.30 hrs., having been seen on both banks of the river (RJH *et al.*).

This bird frequently sought out a tiny rocky islet in the main weirpool, probably the only spot for miles around which closely resembled its winter coastal habitat! Unfortunately, on the second day it was seen to be trailing a two metre length of fishing line from one leg, which severely hindered its movements on the ground. This is the 28th record for the London Area, the last having been in 1981.

184 Dunlin

Monthly maxima at the eight principal sites are given in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Crossness/ Thamesmead (K)	c.100	c.100	c.100	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dartford Marsh (K)	c.600	100+	53	—	270	—	—	2	—	—	c.45	656
Erith Marshes (K)	310	—	400	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Perry Oaks S.F. (M)	c.30	6	50+	9	5	—	17	11	9	—	—	2
Rainham Marsh (E)	2,000	300	200	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	600	2,000
Staines Res. (M)	—	—	2	3	12	—	—	—	30+	57	81	70+
Swanscombe Marsh (K)	c.50	100	100+	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Thurrock (E)	3,000	1,300	3,000	480	536	—	—	7	48	—	1,500	600

Elsewhere in London, reports were received for every month of the year, and were widespread. In addition to the table above, there was an isolated count of 500 at Barking on Mar. 3rd. Inland, numbers were predictably low, and away from the two sites in the table the highest numbers were 11 at Spout Lane Fields on Apr. 1st, nine at King George VI Res. on Jan. 15th, and seven at Barn Elms Res. on Apr. 11th. The many gaps in the table would seem to indicate that although there is probably a proliferation of Dunlin sites along the Lower Thames, there is a paucity of Dunlin counters! Obviously there are still many localities, especially in this area, which are pitifully under-watched. Enterprising observers, as well as adding to the completeness of our knowledge of common visitors such as this species, may well turn up a few surprises.

188 Ruff

Very few of this species appeared to be present during the first two months of the year, the lack of any Essex records for the period was especially noticeable. Spring passage numbers were also sparse with a peak from late March to mid-April. Autumn numbers from July to early October were similar to those in recent years as were counts of wintering birds during the last two months of the year.

E Fairlop G.P., one on May 5th. Netherhall G.P., one on Apr. 24th and 29th. Walthamstow Res., singles on Apr. 23rd, May 7th, July 15th, Aug. 14th and Sept. 16th. West Thurrock, 11 on Oct. 8th. Rainham Marsh, monthly maxima are given in the following table.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
—	—	10	6	1	—	3	35	26	—	2	—

H Broxbourne G.P., one or two from Apr. 26th to 29th. Cole Green, recorded on most dates between Aug. 4th and Sept. 12th with a maximum of seven on Aug. 18th. Cooper's Green, three on Aug. 19th and two on the 23rd. Hilfield Park Res., one on Sept. 18th. Rye Meads S.F., two flew N on Apr. 18th. Tyttenhanger, one on July 15th.

M Brent Res., one on most dates from Aug. 11th to 31st. Kempton Park Res., one on July 22nd, singles on several dates between Aug. 4th and 16th, and on Sept. 5th. Wraysbury Res., one on Sept. 1st. Monthly maxima for Perry Oaks S.F. and Staines Res. are given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Perry Oaks S.F.	—	3	1	—	—	—	2	14	12	—	7	18
Staines Res.	17	—	16	1	—	—	—	1	11	18	20	20+

- K Dartford Marsh, nine on Jan. 14th, six on 24th and seven on Apr. 14th. Erith Marsh, one on Jan. 20th and Mar. 5th. Swanscombe Marsh, one on Mar. 17th. Thamesmead, up to six in March and up to 17 on various dates between Apr. 9th and 17th.
- S Barn Elms Res., singles on May 13th, July 8th and Aug. 26th. Beddington S.F., one on Mar. 24th, two on Apr. 21st; regular passage took place from July 17th to Sept. 22nd with a maximum of seven on Sept. 12th, one on Nov. 29th and two from Dec. 26th to the end of the year.

189 Jack Snipe

The minimum number of individuals recorded during each month is given below.

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Total birds	25	27	16	9	1	9	21	34
Total sites	10	13	12	7	1	7	10	17

A slight increase in numbers compared with 1983. Nine at Dagenham Chase on Jan. 11th (JMH) was the highest number reported in the early months of the year when records were received from 23 localities; the last bird of the spring was at Rye Meads S.F. on May 2nd (RMRG). During June and July a single bird was present at Stanstead Abbots G.P., and its unique display was watched on June 7th and 17th (HPM, GJW); no breeding was suspected. Although this species has summered in the London Area before (in 1948 and 1949 at Moor Mill (H)), it is still an exceptionally rare bird during the summer months anywhere in the British Isles, indeed breeding has never been proved.

The first returning migrant was not seen until Oct. 6th when one was present at Fishers Green (GJW). During the last three months of the year it was noted at 23 localities, the maximum count was of eight at Perry Oaks S.F. on Dec. 8th (CL).

190 Snipe

Breeding season records, the largest counts in each county and two Inner London records are given.

- E Dagenham, 70 on Jan. 11th and 80 on Nov. 14th. Parndon Meads, 110 on Mar. 30th.
- H Broad Colney, display on three dates in May. Broxbourne G.P., up to 200 present in December. Cheshunt G.P., 30 on Dec. 16th. Cole Green, 50 on Mar. 29th, one drumming on May 9th, one 'chipping' on June 15th and 58 on Nov. 18th. Kingsmead, 50 on Jan. 29th and 39 on Nov. 25th. London Colney, one pair present until June 9th. Park Street, one pair probably bred. Rye House Marsh, one pair probably bred. Waterford Marsh, 25 on Nov. 18th.
- M Brent Res., 22 on Mar. 17th. Broadwater G.P., 40+ on Jan. 7th. Crows Nest Farm, Harefield, 43 on Mar. 10th. Kempton Park Res., c.60 on Jan. 29th. Staines Moor, c.200 on Mar. 30th and 80 on Nov. 26th. Staines Res., c.50 on Mar. 11th, 77 on Oct. 9th and 150+ on Dec. 1st. Stanwell Moor, c.30 on Mar. 25th. Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Apr. 5th (TRD). St. James's Park, two flying at tree-top level over the lake on Apr. 9th (HB).
- B Wraysbury G.P., 20 flying over on Dec. 16th. Yiewsley G.P., 19 on Dec. 23rd.
- K Dartford Marsh, 30 on Jan. 26th, one drumming during mid-April. Erith Marsh, c.30 on Apr. 4th. Sevenoaks G.P., 20+ on several dates

from January to March and 40+ on Nov. 12th. Swanscombe Marsh, one displaying on Apr. 7th. Thamesmead, up to 30 present during the period January to March.

- S Beddington S.F., 80+ on Mar. 10th and 45+ on Dec. 14th. Hogsmill S.F., 20 on Jan. 28th and 30 on Dec. 1st. Holmethorpe S.P., 21 on Mar. 4th and 31 on Dec. 9th.

Mild weather conditions at both ends of the year were probably responsible for the below-average numbers; up to 200 at Broxbourne G.P. during December was the maximum reported during the winter months. At several locations peak numbers occurred towards the end of March with a maximum of 200 at Staines Moor on the 30th. No definite breeding was established. Only two sites in Herts. reported probable breeding. The number of records denoting display was well below normal and especially noticeable was the complete absence of such records in Middlesex where a single bird at Frays Meadows on June 12th was the only sighting between late April and early August.

194 Woodcock

All records away from breeding sites are summarised in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sightings	11	12	21	5	1	6	7
Total birds	12	14	24	7	1	7	14

Wintering numbers were low at both ends of the year. Most sightings were of single birds. The most seen together was at least five flushed at Crowhurst Lane End (S) on Dec. 9th (PEJ). The table clearly indicates some passage in March. The only Inner London record was a bird which twice hit a closed window in Farringdon Road, EC1 (M) during the early morning on Nov. 2nd before eventually flying off W (DV).

In the breeding season birds were seen at the following localities (minimum number of birds in brackets). The absence of any Middlesex records is responsible for the slight decrease in the number of sites.

- E Epping Forest (1). Havering (2).
 H Bishop's Wood (1). Broxbourne Woods (5). Northaw Great Wood (5). Wormley Wood (2).
 S Ashted Common (1). Bookham Common (3). Near Cobham (2). Epsom Common (1). Headley Heath (2). Walton Heath (3).

195 Black-tailed Godwit

- E Netherhall G.P., one on Aug. 2nd (GJW). Rainham Marsh, one on Mar. 11th (TW). Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 9th (ADLL). West Thurrock, singles on Apr. 15th (MS) and Sept. 2nd (RBH).
 H Stocker's Lake, one flew NE on Apr. 20th (RRD, RBH, AVM).
 M Staines Moor, one from Mar. 30th to 31st (IGJ *et al.*). Staines Res., one on Sept. 20th (RBH, CL).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., one on July 13th (JT).
 S Beddington S.F., one on July 13th (GDJM), another from July 21st to 26th (mo) and one on Aug. 26th (DJB).

A similar dispersal of records to 1983. All sightings involved single birds.

196 Bar-tailed Godwit

- E Ilford, three flying S on Aug. 25th (CGN). King George V Res., four on Apr. 28th, three on 29th, two on 30th and one on May 2nd (JF, RBH, PJV); during the autumn 40 flew S on Sept. 10th (GJW). Rainham Marsh, 11 on Apr. 28th (RBH), seven on 30th and three on May 17th (MKD, JMH). Tilbury, three on May 17th (JMH). West Thurrock, four on Apr. 28th, one on 30th and eight on May 6th (RBH, JMH, AVM).
- H Amwell G.P., one on May 3rd and two on 4th (GJW). Cole Green, one present from Apr. 29th until May 1st (PDW *et al.*). Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 30th (RMRG).
- M Staines Res., 22 flew E on Apr. 28th (MJG, RJS), on the following day a total of seven birds was seen, either flying over or settling for short periods (mo) and another single was seen on May 28th (MP).
- B Horton G.P., singles on May 1st and 3rd (CDRH).
- S Barn Elms Res., 13 (in two groups) flying NE on Apr. 29th (RBH), two on May 1st (NPS) and one on May 10th which frequented the nearby playing fields until May 15th (mo); seven flew S on Aug. 2nd (RJS). Beddington S.F., singles on May 6th and 10th (GDJM). Holmethorpe S.P., one on May 9th (JDF).

In terms of bird/days a much better year than 1983, and the spring passage was much more widespread across the Area due to the easterly winds that were continuous from late April until mid-May. The poor totals at Staines Res. reflect the high water level here during the spring. The two autumn sightings only serve to emphasise the spring bias; large flocks in autumn are not as regular as spring ones.

198 Whimbrel

There was a fine spring passage this year, undoubtedly aided by the easterly winds that were prevalent during this period, and extended from Apr. 14th to May 22nd accounting for nearly 80% of the year's records. There was a marked movement across the Area on May 6th involving five localities, three flocks at Staines Res. on this date (totalling 62 birds) probably all involved different individuals. Autumn passage took place between July 14th and Sept. 2nd and included a July flock. The total of 163 bird/days this year compares with 100 bird/days in 1983, when Staines Res. claimed 60 bird/days (70 bird/days this year) during the spring, so overall a much better year than 1983.

- E Grays, two on Apr. 19th (JMH). Rainham Marsh, singles on Apr. 30th, May 10th and July 14th (JMH, PJV). Sewardstone, one on Apr. 20th (CF). South Woodford, one on May 9th (CJMG). West Thurrock, two on Apr. 28th and May 6th then one on Sept. 2nd (RBH, AVM). Walthamstow Res., one on April 23rd and seven circling overhead on May 17th (AB).
- H Amwell G.P., one flew N on May 1st (GJW). Broxbourne G.P., singles all flying N on Apr. 23rd, 26th and 28th (RN, BT, GJW). Rye Meads S.F., one flew N on May 1st (RMRG). Stanstead Abbots G.P., two flew NE on Apr. 25th (HPM). Stocker's Lake, one on Apr. 23rd (DC).
- M East Finchley, one flew N on May 19th (PJCr). Osterley Park, 20 flying W on July 29th (JAS). Queen Mary G.P., one on July 21st (HRG). Queen Mary Res., one on Apr. 14th, 11 flew E on 23rd and

one NE on May 3rd (HRG,GMH). Staines Res., one on Apr. 21st (RJH,PN), six (in two groups) on Apr. 28th (MJG,PN,RJS); on May 6th 15 flew E at 10.45 hrs. (CJH,JAH,PN), a further 24 flew over at 15.30 hrs. (MJW) and perhaps a different flock of 23 settled on the reservoir bank in 'the evening' (CWW) and lastly one on May 22nd (MJW).

- B Wraysbury G.P., three on July 1st and two on Aug. 4th (RRG).
 K Chislehurst, one calling on Aug. 21st (KHP). Dartford Marsh, one on Aug. 25th (DD). Foots Cray Meadows, two on Apr. 22nd (SJG). Hoblingwell Wood, one flew over on Aug. 26th (KHP). Orpington, two on Aug. 14th (BRG). Swanscombe Marsh, one flew upriver on May 6th (RBH).
 S Barn Elms Res., single birds flying over on Apr. 24th, 26th, May 1st, 4th, 6th and 8th (RBH,NPS *et al.*). Beddington S.F., one on May 6th (GDJM). Holmethorpe S.P., three on May 3rd and one on Aug. 26th (JDF). Wallington, between eight and ten flew over calling on Sept. 2nd (KDGM).

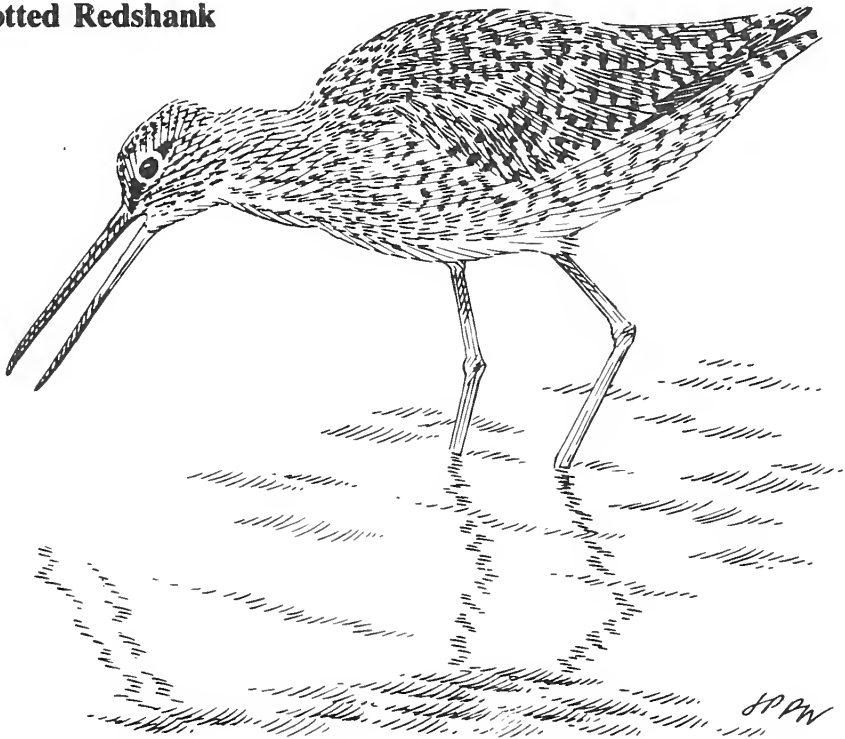
199 Curlew

All records are summarised in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sightings	5	2	10	6	2	2	7	10	1	1	3	—
Total birds	21	11	32	7	4	3	9	14	1	1	3	—

There were no hard weather movements at either end of the year. The West Thurrock high-water roost held up to ten birds from January to March but there was no evidence of a roost at the latter end of the year. Excluding the West Thurrock roost birds, March numbers were still high with peak spring movements occurring towards the end of the month, which contrasts with the April peak in 1983. Autumn passage was light with the general pattern similar to previous years.

201 Spotted Redshank



There were four spring records. Autumn passage lasted from July 23rd to Sept. 16th with 25 birds occurring during the period. There was one winter record. Although there have been six records in the

winter during the last 15 years, this appears to be the first occasion that a bird has attempted to winter.

- E King George V Res., one on Aug. 12th, two on 13th and one on 18th (RBH,PJV,GJW). Netherhall G.P., two on Aug. 11th (CAA). Rainham Marsh, one on May 3rd (NJI). Walthamstow Res., one on Apr. 23rd, 24th and three on Aug. 15th (PF,AJGy). West Thurrock, one on Aug. 28th (JMH).
- H Broxbourne G.P., one on Aug. 10th (GJW). Cole Green, one present from Aug. 16th to 18th (BTS,PDW). Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 7th (GJW).
- M Brent Res., one on Aug. 12th and 13th (RB). Perry Oaks S.F., one from Aug. 25th to Sept. 5th (JAS *et al.*). Queen Mary G.P., one on July 23rd (HRG). Staines Res., one on Apr. 9th (GDJM), one from Aug. 30th to Sept. 4th (RJS *et al.*) (this was the Perry Oaks S.F. bird), and one from Nov. 13th to the end of the year (IGJ,RJS *et al.*).
- S Beddington S.F., a juvenile from Aug. 12th to 18th, but two together on Aug. 13th and two on Sept. 6th (GDJM,KDGM). Holmethorpe S.P., one on Sept. 16th (JDF). Island Barn Res., one on Aug. 25th (RJH). Walton Res., one on Sept. 16th (DG,CO).

202 Redshank

Breeding season records, large counts and an Inner London record are given.

- E Berwick Ponds, two pairs bred. Dagenham, one pair bred. Fishers Green, two pairs present, one pair attempted to breed without success. Rainham Marsh, ten pairs bred. West Thurrock, four pairs bred. Monthly maxima at the two main wintering localities were as follows.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marsh	—	—	200	10	—	110	160	110
West Thurrock	1,000	230	500	60	80	226	490	170

No counts were received from Rainham Marsh for January, February or September.

- H Bricket Wood, one pair present during April and May, did not breed. Broad Colney Pasture, one pair nesting on May 19th. Broxbourne G.P., one pair in April did not stay to breed. Near Hatfield, two or three pairs present throughout breeding season. Colney Park G.P., a pair on June 9th. London Colney, one pair bred. Park Street, one pair present from April to June, probably bred. Tyttenhanger G.P., one pair bred.
- M Perry Oaks S.F., several pairs were present throughout the breeding season, one adult was seen with two fledged young on July 10th and another adult with one young on the 31st. Queen Mary Res., one pair displaying in May and June. Staines Res., a pair present up to June 17th. Monthly maxima at the two most regular sites are given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Perry Oaks S.F.	—	—	10	5	13	24	14	5	—	—	—	2
Staines Res.	—	12	10	10	5	2	—	—	—	8	10	15

The lack of records from both sites for certain months makes a comparison with the 1983 monthly maxima difficult; clearly defined, however, is the decrease of spring passage birds at Staines Res. due to the absence of any suitable wader habitat because of the high water level. Away from the two regular sites the maximum reported was 18 at King George VI Res., on May 5th. Inner London: Bankside, one flying downriver on Mar. 30th (RS).

- B Wraysbury G.P., one seen in flight on June 10th was the only record.
- K River Thames at Crossness, 30+ from January to March. Dartford Marsh, c.100 on Jan 6th and 185 on Dec. 8th; two pairs present in the breeding season. Erith Marsh, 180 on Jan. 20th; at least two pairs present from April to June. Northfleet, c.151 on Feb. 13th. Swanscombe Marsh, 50 to 60 present at both ends of the year; two pairs displaying on May 27th. Thamesmead, one pair in the breeding season. Away from the River Thames, the only records were at Sevenoaks G.P., where one was present on Apr. 1st and two on June 22nd.
- S Beddington S.F., one or two pairs holding territory from April to June. Hersham, occasional display was observed from Apr. 26th to June 5th.

203 Marsh Sandpiper

- E/H One at Broxbourne G.P. (H) on Apr. 28th was observed later the same day at Holyfield Marsh G.P. (E) (ADS, GJW *et al.*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the third record of this species for the London Area, and the first spring record. The status of this species has undergone a complete transformation in Britain since its last appearance in London in 1966 (the 15th British record). Up to the end of 1983 this had risen to 45 records. It seems likely that it will not be quite so long before this graceful wader puts in another, and hopefully longer, appearance in London.

204 Greenshank

Both spring and autumn passage numbers were exceptionally high. Spring passage was recorded at 22 localities between Apr. 21st and May 28th with a maximum of six at Perry Oaks S.F. from May 6th to 8th. Autumn passage was recorded at 41 localities (well above the 30 and 31 of 1982 and 1983 respectively) from early July to mid-October with several double figure counts at various sites.

The draining of Brent Res. during mid-July resulted in above normal numbers being recorded there from July 20th until the end of September. A single bird at Cheshunt G.P., on Nov. 11th and one at Brent Res. on Dec. 15th were the only sightings outside the normal passage periods. All spring records and summaries of autumn records in each county are given, as well as a winter record (only the second since 1977).

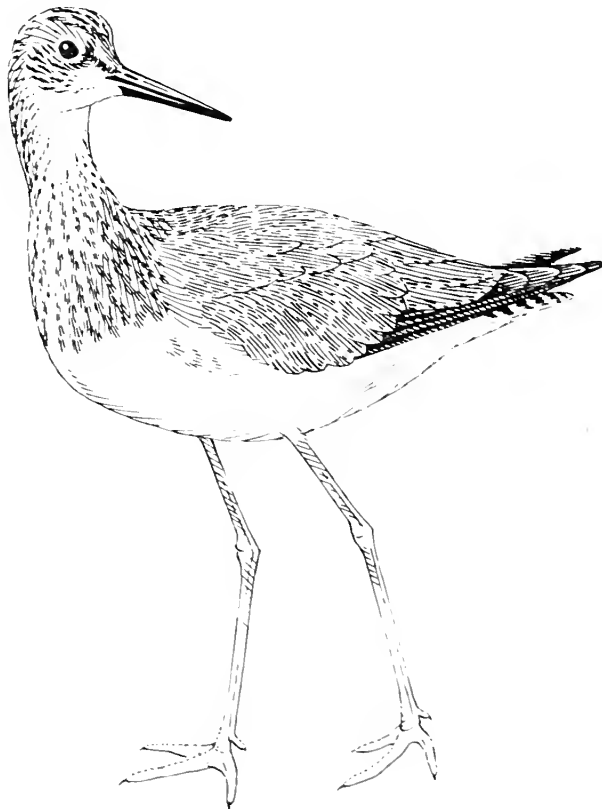
- E King George V Res., one on May 2nd. Rainham Marsh, singles on Apr. 27th, 28th, and May 3rd. Tilbury, one on May 17th. Walthamstow Res., one or two on various dates between May 1st and 13th. West Thurrock, one on May 6th. Reported from six sites in autumn, the maximum was 17 at King George V Res. on Aug. 18th.
- H Amwell G.P., one present from Apr. 29th to 30th and May 2nd to 3rd. Broad Colney, one on May 5th. Broxbourne G.P., one present from Apr. 25th to 28th and two on 29th. Park Street, one on Apr. 27th. Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 23rd and May 6th. Tyttenhanger, one on Apr. 28th. Reported from 12 sites in autumn, the maximum being 14 at Cole Green on Aug. 17th; eight were present at Hilfield Park Res. on the same date.
- M Brent Res., one on Dec. 15th (RB). Kempton Park Res., singles on Apr. 22nd, 29th and from May 5th to 7th. Perry Oaks S.F., six were

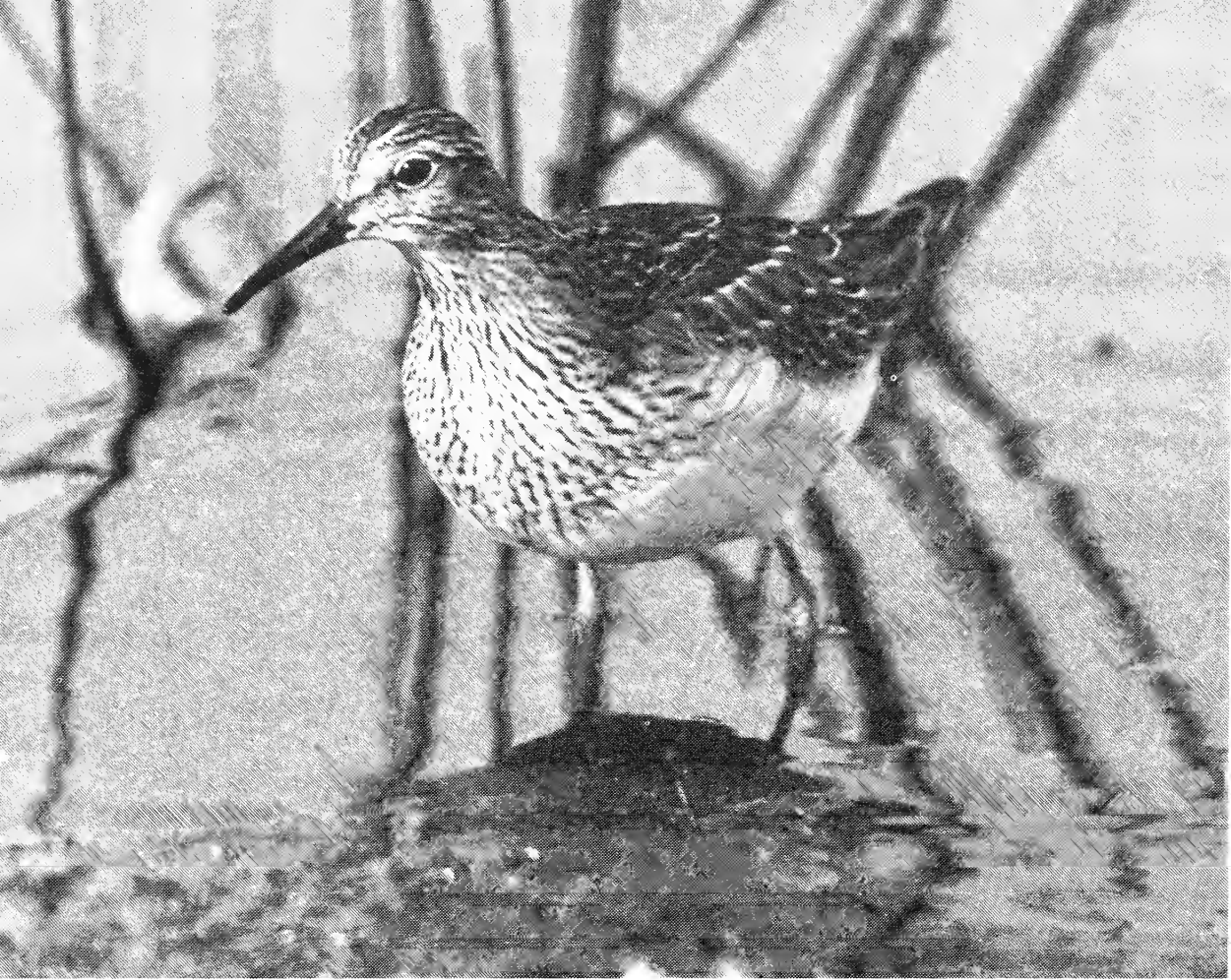
present from May 6th to 8th, birds were then present continuously until the last on May 28th with peaks of four on May 12th and from 18th to 19th. Queen Mary G.P., one on Apr. 23rd and May 5th, three on May 12th and two on the 19th. Stain Hill Res., one on Apr. 28th. Staines Moor, one on Apr. 22nd. Staines Res., one on Apr. 21st, 22nd, 27th, May 3rd and two on May 16th.

In autumn at the drained Brent Res. there was a total of 160 bird/days on 31 dates between July 20th and Sept. 23rd with a maximum of 13 on Aug. 14th. Passage was recorded at Staines Res. from Aug. 9th to Sept. 25th with a maximum of six on Sept. 15th and also at nine other sites including Queen Mary G.P., where the highest autumn total of 14 was seen on Aug. 25th. Inner London: Regent's Park, two flew over calling on Aug. 24th (TRDt), only the fifth Inner London record during the last 15 years.

- B Old Slade N.R., one on Sept. 2nd. Wraysbury G.P., five on Aug. 25th.
- K Littlebrook G.P., one on May 17th was the only spring record. In autumn only reported from three sites with a maximum of six flying over Chislehurst on Sept. 16th.
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 26th and May 6th. Beddington S.F., one on May 1st. Godstone N.R., one on May 13th. Reported from eight localities in autumn with a maximum of 15 at Beddington S.F. on Aug. 23rd. Other high counts were 11 at Island Barn Res. on Aug. 17th and the same number at Walton Res. on Aug. 22nd.

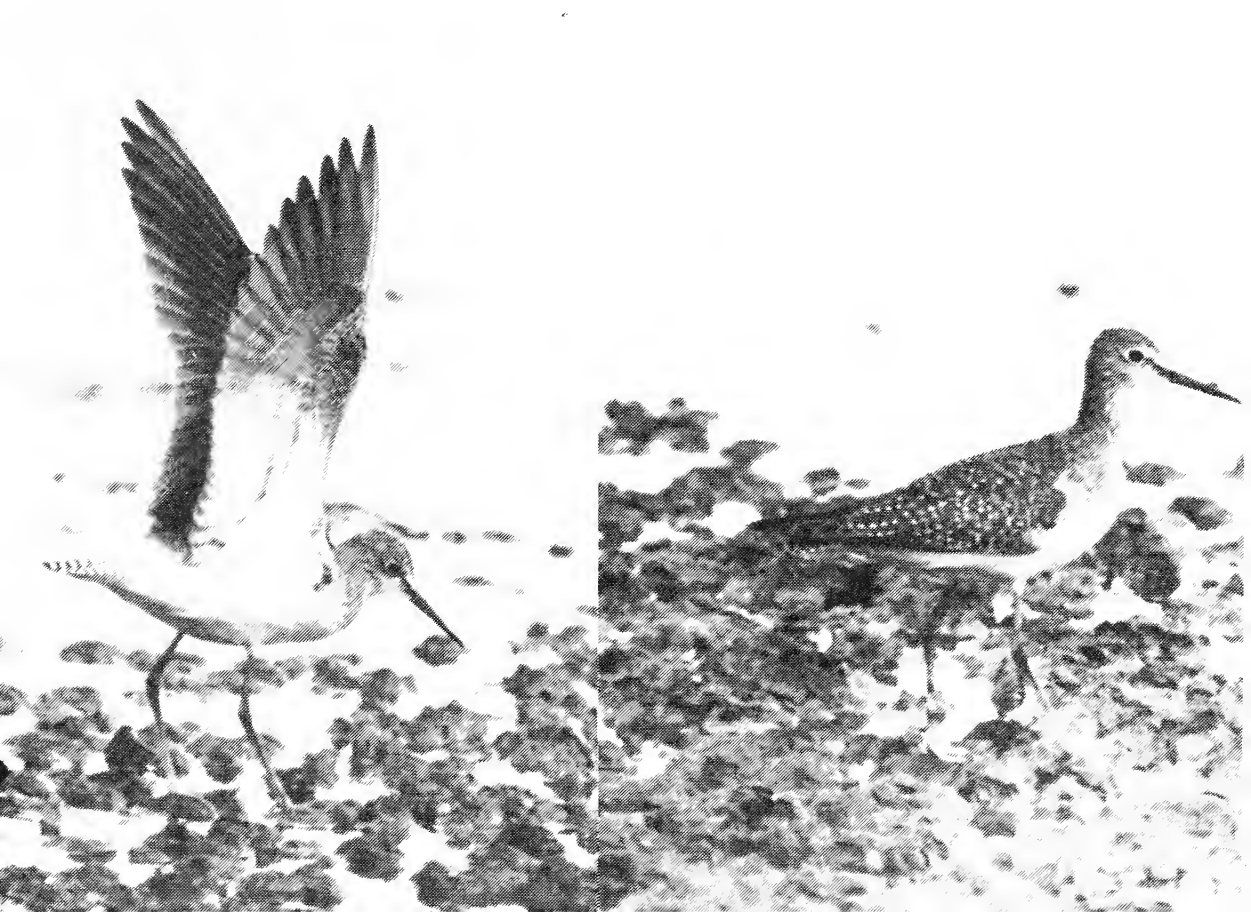
206 Lesser Yellowlegs





ABOVE: *Pectoral Sandpiper* at *Staines Res.* in *September 1984.*
(Photo: *G. M. Haig*).

BELOW: *Lesser Yellowlegs* at *Beddington S.F.* in *September 1984*
(Photo: *R. B. Hastings*)



- S Beddington S.F., a juvenile present from Sept. 24th to 30th (GDJM *et al.*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this is the fifth record of this Nearctic species in the London Area. The last record in London was in 1977, although the record prior to this was as long ago as 1962. (See photograph opposite).

208 Green Sandpiper

Winter records came from 23 localities early in the year and from 15 localities at the end of the year. Maximum winter counts were six at Rainham Marsh on Nov. 8th and six at Iver S.F. on Dec. 16th. A survey carried out in Herts. on Nov. 17th resulted in a total of 17 birds being located within the LNHS boundary. Recorded at 25 localities on spring passage up to May 20th, with a maximum of four at Rainham Marsh on several dates in April. There were several June records of early returning migrants or non-breeders, the first at Cole Green on the 9th was followed by one at Beddington S.F. on the 10th. The species was reported from 40 sites during the autumn; the highest totals for each county during the autumn are given below as well as an Inner London record.

- E Netherhall G.P., six on Aug. 7th. Rainham Marsh, 25 on Aug. 24th. West Thurrock, six on several dates during September.
- H Cole Green, 25 on Aug. 9th. Cooper's Green, eight on Aug. 12th. Maple Cross S.F., eight in August. Rye Meads S.F., seven on several dates in September.
- M Brent Res., four on Aug. 28th. Perry Oaks S.F., eight on Sept. 21st. Staines Res., three on Sept. 26th. Inner London: Camley Street Natural Park, NW1, one on Aug. 20th (*jsn*), was only the sixth in Inner London during the last 15 years.
- B Iver S.F., seven on Oct. 14th. Queen Mother Res., three on Oct. 14th.
- K Sevenoaks G.P., up to nine on several dates in August with a maximum of 11 on 19th.
- S Beddington S.F., 15 on July 30th. Holmethorpe S.P., 17 on Sept. 2nd.

209 Wood Sandpiper

Recorded at six sites on spring passage and at 12 during the autumn. There was one June record, the earliest for seven years.

- E Fairlop G.P., one on Aug. 8th (*CGN*). Fishers Green, one on Aug. 11th (*CCJ*). Netherhall G.P., one from Aug. 20th to 22nd (*JF, GJW*). Rainham Marsh, three on Aug. 18th, two on 19th and 25th (*NJI*).
- H Amwell G.P., one on various dates between Aug. 28th and Sept. 4th (*CAA*). Broad Colney Pastures, one on May 13th (*SP*). Cooper's Green G.P., one on May 13th and one on Aug. 19th (*SP, RNS*). London Colney, one on May 6th (*JHT*). Rye Meads S.F., one from Apr. 28th to 30th, three from Aug. 12th to 18th and from Aug. 19th to Sept. 4th, but with two on Sept. 2nd (*RMRG*).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 10th and 12th and a different bird present from the 13th to 15th (*TJD, CL et al.*); singles on several dates from Aug. 5th to 30th (*mo*). Staines Res., one on Sept. 25th (*IGJ*).
- K Rookery Lake, Bromley Common, one on Apr. 23rd (*GDN*). Sevenoaks G.P., two on June 17th (*JT*).
- S Beddington S.F., one from May 10th to 13th (*GDJM*); one from July 26th to 31st (*GDJM*) with two on the 28th (*JBT*), one on Aug. 2nd, two from Aug. 8th to 16th and then one on the 17th (*SPJ, GDJM*).

211 Common Sandpiper

One or two wintering birds were present at nine localities early in the year and singles were reported from eight sites during the last two months of the year. Spring passage lasted from late March until the end of May with a peak of 12 at Walthamstow Res. on May 19th. There were three June records; one at Buckland S.P. on the 9th, one at Amwell G.P. on the 14th and one at Staines Res. on the 17th. Autumn passage numbers built up from early July with peaks in all counties occurring between Aug. 5th and 25th. Highest autumn counts and Inner London records are given.

- E Fairlop G.P., 12 on Aug. 25th. Lea Valley Reservoirs, 55 on Aug. 12th. Rainham Marsh, 11 on Aug. 11th and 52 on July 27th.
 H Hilfield Park Res., 12 on Aug. 19th. Rye Meads S.F., 15 on Aug. 5th and 16th.
 M Brent Res., 41 on Aug. 14th. Kempton Park Res., 17 on Aug. 17th. Perry Oaks S.F., 30 on Aug. 4th and 17th. Staines Res., 14 on Aug. 19th. Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on May 17th. Regent's Park, singles recorded on eight occasions in spring and autumn. St. James's Park, one on Mar. 22nd and two on Apr. 15th.
 K Dartford Marsh, five on Aug. 25th.
 S Barn Elms Res., 19 on Aug. 12th. Beddington S.F., 18 on July 24th and 26th. Island Barn Res., 20 on Aug. 18th.

213 Turnstone

There was only one record during the early part of the year. Spring passage occurred between Apr. 25th and June 5th with a maximum of four at Staines Res. on Apr. 26th. Autumn passage was light and lasted from July 23rd to Sept. 6th with a maximum of five on Sept. 5th. There were four records at the end of the year including the highest total for the year of eight at Grays (E).

- E Aveley Marsh, four on Apr. 30th (JMH). Grays, one on Apr. 19th, four on Nov. 30th, eight on Dec. 29th (JMH). Rainham Marsh, one on Apr. 30th, two on May 19th, one on July 27th and one on Dec. 8th (MKD, JMH). West Thurrock, four (perhaps six) on Mar. 7th, two on the 18th and two on May 6th (RBH, JMH, AVM). Walthamstow Res., three on Apr. 25th (PF), one on May 1st and 11th (TG, REH), one on June 5th (PF) and three on July 25th (ADLL). Wm. Girling Res., one on May 5th (GJW).
 H Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 28th and three on June 2nd (MJE).
 M Broadwater G.P., one on July 23rd (IGJ). Queen Mary Res., one on May 12th (HRG). Staines Res., four on Apr. 26th (GMH), one on 27th, two on 28th (PN, JAS), one on May 4th (mo) and three on May 10th and 11th (TJD *et al.*). Wraysbury Res., two on Apr. 27th (CDRH) and one on Apr. 29th (CJH, JAH, PN).
 S Barn Elms Res., one on May 17th, one on Sept. 4th and three on Dec. 2nd (RBH, ADLL, NPS). Beddington S.F., two on July 25th and five on Sept. 5th (GDJM, DHH).

215 Red-necked Phalarope

- E King George V Res., one on Aug. 16th and 17th (AJGY *et al.*).

This is the tenth record for the London Area, the third from this site and the fourth during August.

216 Grey Phalarope

- E King George V Res., one from Oct. 4th to 8th (KM *et al.*).
 M Staines Res., one from Sept. 29th to Oct. 1st (PN, BAR *et al.*).

Two very typical records and the first since the deluge of eight in 1981.

218 Arctic Skua

- M Staines Res., a dark-phase bird flew N then back S again on Apr. 8th (RBH, MJR), and another dark-phase adult was present on Sept. 1st (TSC, JHS, JW *et al.*).

This species has been averaging four records a year for the last decade, so this is quite a poor showing. However, the April sighting is of interest as the earliest ever in spring. There has now been a single spring record in five of the last ten years.

Skua sp.

- E Tilbury, one flew upriver on Oct. 5th (AVM).
 K Dartford Marsh, two flew upriver on Aug. 25th (DD).

220 Great Skua

- E King George V Res., one on Sept. 22nd and 23rd also visited Wm. Girling Res. to roost (PAB *et al.*).
 K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Jan. 3rd (PFH, RHT), was known to have been present for several days.

These two records take the London Area total to 12. Formerly this skua was a considerable rarity but there have now been five sightings in three years. Winter records are not unknown; the Kent sighting is the third for that season and the second in January. September remains the leading month with five records.

222 Mediterranean Gull

- E Wanstead Park, a first-winter bird on Sept. 16th (MDD).
 M Staines Res., an adult on Oct. 13th (CIB).
 S Barn Elms Res., a first-winter bird on Apr. 9th (RJS), 11th (NPS) and 14th (RBH) was largely seen along the River Thames. Beddington S.F., a second-winter bird on Jan. 1st (GDJM), an adult on Jan. 4th (DHH, GDJM) and an adult in summer plumage on July 24th (SJD, SPJ, GDJM).

The total of five or six individuals is about average, though less than in either of the last two years. The July record is the first-ever for that month, and it means that this gull has now occurred in every month of the year in London. The peak period has clearly been from October to February; perhaps we should expect more passage records like the two above in April and September.

225 Little Gull

The bird/day total for each county in each month is given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Essex	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	24	3	3	3	—
Herts.	—	—	—	39	44	—	—	3	—	—	1	—
Middx.	—	—	—	7	136	51	1	16	3	5	1	1
Bucks.	—	—	—	1	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kent	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	6	2	—	2	6
Surrey	1	—	—	3	10	—	—	2	—	3	1	—
Total	1	—	—	59	196	51	1	51	8	11	8	7

There was an exceptional total of 393 bird/days, involving at least 159 birds. The only record early in the year concerned a first-winter bird at Queen Elizabeth II Res. on Jan. 15th (DG,CO). Spring passage was distinctly underway in late April when there were up to five birds at both Broxbourne G.P. (WGL,GJW) and Staines Res. (mo). This was no warning, however, for the massive passage that followed at Staines Res., where a remarkable total of 31 birds on May 1st (RBH) increased to no less than 45 on May 2nd (RBH,AVM,PN). 42 of these birds appeared to be adults. The previous largest gathering in London was 20 at Queen Mary Res. in August 1975, while the previous largest spring flock was 17 at Staines Res. In May 1974. On May 3rd the group numbered 31 again, then a rapid exodus ensued and only two remained from May 4th onwards. Hilfield Park Res. also received an influx with ten on May 2nd and 13 on May 3rd (CIB). In complete contrast, none at all was seen in Essex during May. The ten bird/days in Surrey involved one long-staying adult at Barn Elms Res. from May 8th, this eventually being found dead (mo).

The June records probably all involved the same three immatures which lingered at Staines Res. and Queen Mary G.P. for most of the month (HRG,AVM,PN,MP). In July, one was at Staines Res. on the 23rd (RBH). Subsequently the largest number to occur was ten juveniles at King George V Res. on Aug. 12th and 13th (GJW). There were no other counts over four and the passage was distinctly poorer than average in September. There were seven records in November and the year closed with an adult at Broadwater G.P. on Dec. 2nd (RBH) and at least two birds at the Littlebrook Power Station outflow in the River Thames on various dates between Dec. 8th and 27th (DD,AJM,RM,BWt).

It may be of interest to note that in spring (April to May) 80% of aged birds were adults (though second-year birds are not easy to distinguish), whereas in autumn (July to November) this figure had fallen to 17%, a much more normal level. The spring passage was therefore not only notable for its size, but also for its high proportion of adults.

228 Black-headed Gull

All counts over 2,000, a ringing recovery and some Inner London records are given. Winter numbers seemed to be normal. It is difficult to comment on any seasonal pattern in the absence of regular counts at localities where significant numbers occur. Counts at lesser sites suggest that there is no obvious spring passage and that numbers are at their lowest about mid-June.

- E Rainham Marsh, 8,000 on Jan. 14th and 4,000 on Mar. 17th. West Thurrock, 3,000 on Jan. 6th and 4,000 on Jan. 21st. Wm. Girling Res., one found dead on Feb. 12th had been ringed in Estonian S.S.R. on June 16th, 1978.
- H Cole Green, 3,000 on Feb. 29th and 2,000 on Nov. 1st. Hilfield Park Res., 4,000 on Aug. 28th. Maple Cross S.F., regular monthly counts revealed a peak for the year of 500 in March.
- M Brent Res., 5,000+ roosting on Aug. 20th and c.2,000 on Sept. 25th. Broadwater G.P., 2,300 on Jan. 8th, 5,500 on Jan. 14th and c.2,000 on Dec. 1st. Inner London: on Jan. 17th there were 575 in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, 565 in Regent's Park and 635 in St. James's Park (HB). Victoria Park, 1,331 on Jan. 3rd (IWG).
- K Dartford Marsh, 3,000+ on Jan. 6th, 4,000+ on Jan. 14th and

2,000+ on Dec. 15th. Erith Marsh, c.4,000 on Jan. 20th. Sevenoaks G.P., 2,500 on Dec. 4th was the year's maximum. Thamesmead, 5,000 on Jan. 3rd.

- S Barn Elms Res., roost counts of 15,000 on Jan. 25th, 24,000 on Feb. 19th and 26,000 on Dec. 12th. Inner London: regular counts along the River Thames at Westminster produced peaks of 400 in February and 440 in November; there was no noticeable passage peak here in spring or autumn (PJS).

233 Common Gull

The largest counts in each region are given, together with the usual evidence of spring passage at Barn Elms Res. No doubt this passage can be detected elsewhere along the River Thames, but does it affect parts of London more distant from that river? Unfortunately, there were no counts from any of the large reservoirs in winter, so that the bulk of London's Common Gulls have gone unrecorded.

- H Croxley Green, 130 on playing fields on Feb. 4th. Hatfield, 250 on playing fields on Nov. 17th and 140 on Dec. 24th.
 M Broadwater G.P., 500 on Jan. 14th. Mill Hill, 205 on Feb. 27th. Stoke Newington Res., 180 on Dec. 11th. Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, 64 on Jan. 17th. Victoria Park, 186 on Jan. 3rd.
 B No count exceeded 65.
 K Blackheath, c.135 on Jan. 12th. Dartford Marsh, 300+ on Jan. 14th and up to 450 in August and September.
 S Barn Elms Res., peaks occurred in spring of 96 on Mar. 31st and 90 on Apr. 7th; one on Nov. 25th was still in full juvenile plumage. Beddington S.F., 200+ on Dec. 11th. Molesey, c.550 on playing fields on Feb. 11th prior to roosting on nearby reservoirs.

234 Lesser Black-backed Gull

The highest counts in each county and Inner London are given. No black-mantled birds referable to the race *Larus fuscus fuscus* were reported. Only one count exceeded 600. Most of the records below represent the strong annual movement through London between August and October. The largest numbers tend to occur at winter roosts but there were no counts from these in 1984.

- E Fairlop G.P., 450 on Sept. 22nd.
 H Hilfield Park Res., 480 on Aug. 28th. Rye Meads S.F., 500 on Oct. 13th.
 M Queen Mary Res., 600+ on Sept. 1st. Wraysbury Res., 2,700 at roost on Sept. 1st.
 K Sevenoaks G.P., monthly maxima are given below.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
15	15	15	23	28	203	154	255	283	246	50	30

- S Holmethorpe S.P., c.300 on June 24th and 310 on Oct. 21st. Inner London: River Thames at Westminster, the year's peak was 22 on June 25th.

It is not clear whether the three June counts above constitute early starts to the autumn passage or separate movements of non-breeding birds.

235a Herring Gull

The highest counts received were as follows.

- E Fairlop, 500 in December.
- M Wraysbury Res., 900+ on Jan. 8th.
- S Holmethorpe S.P., c.520 on Nov. 25th.

The following breeding season records were all in Inner London as usual: Lord's Cricket Ground, one pair present at usual nest site in May. The Strand, WC2, one pair over the Strand Palace Hotel on June 5th, one bird carrying nest material, possibly nesting on roof. Whitehall, SW1, two pairs, possibly more, reported to be nesting on buildings. The total of three or four nesting pairs, with no young seen, is a considerable decrease on last year's figure. Have observers slackened their efforts?

235b Yellow-legged Herring Gull

Birds of this type have been occurring with increasing frequency in London. Many appear to belong to one or more races which are distinct from such pink-legged forms as *Larus argentatus argenteus* and *L.a. argentatus*. The time therefore seems to have come to allot such birds a separate section in the report.

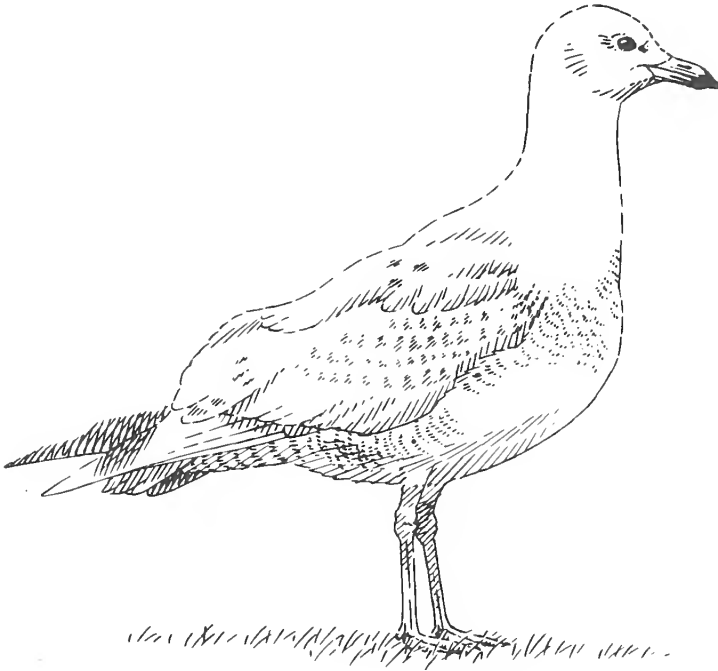
A summary of the records, including all reported localities is given. The birds at Barn Elms Res., Holmethorpe S.P., Queen Mary Res. and West Thurrock showed characters of the race *L.a.michahellis*.

- E Rainham Marsh, two on June 2nd (MKD). River Thames foreshore at West Thurrock, six on Aug. 27th, 16 on Sept. 2nd and two on Sept. 9th (RBH).
- M Queen Mary Res., one found dead on Oct. 19th (GAR). Staines Res., singles throughout August and September, with two on Aug. 19th, 22nd and Sept. 2nd, and three on Sept. 14th (GMH,RBH,AVM *et al.*). Wood Green Res., one on Feb. 8th (NB). Inner London: St. James's Park, one in January, two in February, one on May 11th and one in December (MJE,ADLL,PJO).
- K River Thames foreshore by Dartford Marsh, four on Sept. 2nd (RBH).
- S Addlestone, up to five in July, four in August and three in October (MBL). Barn Elms Res., one on Mar. 10th, then monthly maxima of four in July, 15 in August and September, eight in October, one in November and five in December (RBH,RJS,NPS,JPPW). Holmethorpe S.P., one on Nov. 28th (RES). Inner London: River Thames at Westminster, singles on isolated dates in January and from July to December (PJS).

These are clearly the biggest numbers of these gulls ever seen in London. The majority of birds were seen between June and October, with some lingering during the winter. The most favoured localities were all on the River Thames or within a couple of miles of it. Is this an artificial pattern or do these gulls deliberately follow the river? Another feature, noticed at Barn Elms and Addlestone, was their close association with flocks of Lesser Black-backed Gulls, though this was not the case at West Thurrock.

Observers' attention is drawn to a recent paper on the identification of juvenile Yellow-legged Herring Gulls in *British Birds* 77:344-8; this has already been responsible for slightly higher counts in London. It is interesting to note in that paper that some Continental authorities regard the Yellow-legged Herring Gull group as a separate species – *L.cachinnans*.

236 Iceland Gull



JPPW

- E Wm. Girling Res., a first-winter bird in the gull roost on Jan. 7th (JF).
 H/M Mill Hill, Darlands Lake and Totteridge, a first-winter bird from Mar. 11th to Apr. 8th (WAH *et al.*).
 M Wraysbury Res., a second- or third-winter bird in the gull roost on Dec. 31st (GMH). This individual had been seen earlier in the month at Wrecclesham, Surrey.
 S Barn Elms Res., two first-winter birds came in for four minutes before flying off NW on Mar 25th (NPS).

The four records consist of two from winter roosts and two concerning birds presumably on northbound passage. The status of this gull has changed quite rapidly in London, as it has in much of southern England where there were exceptional numbers in the 1983/84 winter. The only other records during the last 15 years were two in 1982, one in 1980 and one in 1970.

237 Glaucous Gull

There was a good total of six records, following a surprising absence in 1983. At least four of the birds were at large gull roosts which must provide the best opportunities of finding Glaucous and Iceland Gulls in London. Indeed, many of the birds at roosts are probably spending the rest of the day outside the London Area.

- E/M Wm. Girling Res., a first-winter bird in the gull roost on Jan. 28th also crossed the River Lea and visited Edmonton rubbish tip (JF).
 H Broxbourne G.P., an adult on Mar. 15th (GJW).
 M Broadwater G.P., a first-winter bird at roost on Dec. 1st (AVM) flew off N early the following morning. Wraysbury Res., one, probably a third-winter bird, on Dec. 27th and an adult on Dec. 29th (GMH, RBH); both were in the gull roost.
 S Island Barn Res., an adult on fields near the reservoir on Nov. 8th subsequently flew off S (ML).

238 Great Black-backed Gull

All counts over 100 are given. This gull is most prominent in the heart of winter, as the dates below indicate. Few records have been received for other times of year, but it seems that it is scarcest in June and starts to return from mid-July. Spring and autumn passages are either poorly evident or receive little attention.

- H Cole Green, 150 on Jan. 4th. Hilfield Park Res., 315 on Jan. 20th.
 M Wraysbury Res., 202 on Jan. 8th.
 K Sevenoaks G.P., 160 on Jan. 26th and 120 on Dec. 22nd.

240 Kittiwake

This species remained more prominent than usual in London, with 29 records involving 42 birds. There have now been large numbers for four consecutive years, the annual average in this period being 38. As in 1983, harsh winds and temperatures resulted in many arrivals early in the year, particularly from mid-January; 22 birds occurred at this time, including one in Inner London. The spring passage with 11 birds outweighed the autumn total of six. October was the only month without a record.

- E King George V Res., single sub-adults on Jan. 15th and 28th (PAB,RGN,CGN,PJV) and a juvenile on Sept. 24th (KM). Tilbury, one adult and three immatures on Jan. 18th (JMH). West Thurrock, two adults and three immatures on Jan. 22nd, two immatures on Jan. 29th (MKD *et al.*), three adults and one immature on Feb. 9th (JMH), an immature on Mar. 3rd and an adult on Sept. 9th (PJV).
 H Cheshunt G.P., an adult on Mar. 28th (MJH). Stanstead Abbots G.P., a second-winter bird on Jan. 15th (HPM).
 M Alexandra Park, an adult picked up at a boating pond on Feb. 1st later died (NW *per* NB). Brent Res., a juvenile on July 22nd and 24th and another juvenile on Aug. 13th (LAB,WHCG). King George VI Res., an adult flew SW on Nov. 4th (AVM,PN). Queen Mary Res., an immature on May 8th (NPS) and one found dead on Dec. 19th (GAR). Wraysbury Res., one found long dead on May 23rd (CDRH). Inner London: Regent's Park, an adult on Feb. 8th was picked up in a weak condition the next day and later died (TRDT).
 B Queen Mother Res., an adult or second-winter bird on Jan. 4th then two on Jan. 13th, both of which apparently remained until at least mid-February, one subsequently being found dead on Mar. 3rd (IGJ,GAR,JAS *et al.*). Wraysbury G.P., an immature on Jan. 24th (BM) and an adult on Dec. 31st (GMH).
 K Elmers End S.F., an adult on Aug. 27th (RNK). Sevenoaks G.P., three on Apr. 23rd (JT).
 S Barn Elms Res., single adults on Mar. 31st and Apr. 6th (NPS), two adults on Apr. 11th (RJS), a first-summer bird on Apr. 12th (RBH,NPS) and an adult on June 7th (RBH). All these birds passed through without lingering. River Thames by Kew Gardens, an adult floated downstream on Jan. 27th (RBH).

245 Sandwich Tern

- E Walthamstow Res., five on Aug. 9th and two on Sept. 12th (PJV *et al.*). West Thurrock, singles on June 9th and Aug. 25th (MKD), two on Aug. 27th (RBH) and four on Sept. 29th (MKD).
 H Hilfield Park Res., one on Aug. 26th (CIB).
 M Brent Res., one on Sept. 25th and 28th (LAB). Perry Oaks S.F., two juveniles flew N low on Sept. 4th (RBH). Staines Res., one on June

3rd (MP), two on Sept. 7th (RJS) and one on Oct. 2nd (CL).

- K Littlebrook Power Station outflow, one on Aug. 8th, eight on Aug. 25th and five on Sept. 3rd (AJM, RM).
 S Barn Elms Res., one on May 29th (RBH) and two on Sept. 4th (WGH, RJS). Island Barn Res., seven flew over on Oct. 5th (ML). Richmond Park, two juveniles at the Pen Ponds on Aug. 17th (DPB). Southfields, two flew W on Sept. 9th (WGH).

The total of three spring records is typical, though they were unusually confined to the late period from May 29th to June 9th. The 18 autumn records were distinctly more than average; the increase is partly attributable to the new outflow at Littlebrook which looks set to rival the well known one at West Thurrock.

247 Common Tern

Breeding records are given below. Passage records are summarised under 247/8. At least 64 pairs bred and raised a minimum of 118 young. Both figures are an improvement on those for 1983, and make this the best breeding season ever for this species, which first nested in London in 1958.

- E Walthamstow Res., one pair raised one young on a trout fishery raft.
 H Amwell G.P., three pairs raised six young. Rye Meads S.F., 42 pairs reared 91 young. Stocker's Lake, one pair raised one young.
 M Brent Res., three pairs bred; one pair raised two or three young but the other two pairs failed owing to drainage of the reservoir in July. Broadwater G.P., two pairs reared five young, a further two pairs may have bred but no young were seen. Kempton Park Res., one pair nested on logs lying in the drained east basin and raised three young. King George VI Res., at least two pairs were on a nesting raft in spring but the site was not visited in summer.
 B Wraysbury G.P., 11 pairs had nine young and ten eggs in June and up to 30 flying birds were seen in July.

247/8 Common/Arctic Tern

Passage records of Common Terns are summarised here together with unspecified observations of Common/Arctic Terns.

The first to arrive were three (identified as Common) at Staines Res., on Apr. 5th. Spring passage was stronger than in the last two years though no locality produced a strikingly high count. The new outflow off Littlebrook Power Station had 12 on Apr. 23rd, then two days later there were ten at Staines Res. and 30 at Barn Elms Res. In early May there were 20 at King George V Res. on 2nd, 12 at Staines Res. on 5th, ten at Swanscombe on 6th, and the season's overall peak of 40 at West Thurrock on 7th. A lull then occurred until May 22nd when 30 appeared at Hilfield Park Res. and 17 at Barn Elms Res. A final movement in June produced 13 at Staines Res. on 3rd and 35 at West Thurrock on 9th.

The autumn picture was once again dominated by the Lower Thames. At the West Thurrock outflow there were peaks of 25 on July 14th, 150 on Aug. 4th, 130 on Sept. 2nd and 100 on Sept. 29th. Not far upriver, the Littlebrook Power Station outflow attracted similar totals of 65 on July 30th, 80 on Aug. 8th, 150 on Aug. 21st and 23rd, 200 on Aug. 31st and 120 on Sept. 24th. The extent of movements between the two localities is impossible to ascertain. Farther up the Thames, there were 44 at Woolwich on Sept. 10th. In

contrast, west London could only draw peaks of 29 at Barn Elms Res. on Aug. 2nd and 18 at Queen Mary Res. on Sept. 4th. At a similar level, the Lea Valley had 25 at Walthamstow Res. on Aug. 25th, followed by 20 on Sept. 15th, and 20 at King George V Res. on Sept. 10th. There were no discernible widespread movements throughout the London Area.

Remarkably, there were two definite Common Terns at the Littlebrook outflow on Dec. 8th, one of which stayed until Dec. 26th (mo). This is only the fourth winter record for the London Area. The previous three were also in December, as late as 17th, the most recent being way back in 1932. The late autumn of 1984 was unusually mild and this presumably had an influence.

Inner London: River Thames at Westminster, a 'Commic' flew downriver on June 11th and a Common flew upriver on Aug. 3rd (PJS).

248 Arctic Tern

All records are given. It was not a particularly good spring passage and more birds occurred in autumn. Sightings on Apr. 6th and 7th, however, constitute the earliest records for the London Area, the previous earliest being Apr. 11th 1979. It is interesting to note that this tern was not distinguished at all regularly in London until as late as 1971. The full pattern of occurrence is probably still to be established.

- E Netherhall G.P., one on Sept. 2nd (GJW). Walthamstow Res., three on Aug. 15th (TG) and one on Aug. 27th (PL). West Thurrock, two on May 7th (MKD), then in autumn, two on Aug. 12th, singles on Aug. 19th and 27th and Sept. 2nd, two on Sept. 9th and one on Sept. 30th (MKD, RBH, AVM).
- H Broxbourne G.P., one on Apr. 25th (WGL, HPM). Cheshunt G.P., one on May 5th (NAB). Hilfield Park Res., two on May 3rd and one on Oct. 11th (CIB).
- M Queen Mary Res., two on Sept. 4th (GAR). Staines Res., singles on Apr. 6th and 7th and May 9th and 10th (TJD, JAS, MJW), then 15 on Sept. 29th (IGJ). Wraysbury Res., an adult on Aug. 29th (CDRH). Inner London: Regent's Park, three flying NE on Apr. 27th (TRD)
- K Littlebrook Power Station outflow, one on July 30th (AJM, RM).
- S Barn Elms Res., singles on Apr. 29th and 30th (RBH, TJL) and two on Sept. 5th (NPS).

251 Little Tern

Four birds occurred in spring. Autumn records were dominated by two localities on the Lower Thames during August, though there may have been some overlap of birds. Perhaps this series of sightings is connected with the post-breeding gatherings in the Thames Estuary in late summer.

- E West Thurrock, three on Aug. 4th and four on Aug. 12th (MKD).
- M Broadwater G.P., one on June 10th (JE). Queen Mary Res., one on Apr. 15th (NPS). Wraysbury Res., two flew E on May 17th (CDRH).
- K Littlebrook Power Station outflow, three on Aug. 8th, one on Aug. 11th and four on Aug. 13th (AJM, RM). Sevenoaks G.P., one on Sept. 30th (JT).

1983 Additional Records

- M Staines Res., one on Apr. 22nd and two on Aug. 19th (GMH).

253 Black Tern

Spring passage began on Apr. 21st with two at Stanstead Abbots G.P. (GJW) and three at Staines Res. (mo). Movements were much larger than normal with 182 birds seen at 15 localities. The first big wave came on Apr. 25th and included 34 at King George V Res. (GJW), while seven flew E at Staines Res. and later arrived at Barn Elms Res. (RBH). The second largest movement was on May 1st and included 13 at Hilfield Park Res. (CIB) and 13 also at Barn Elms Res. (RBH, NPS, JPPW). A final small passage occurred in mid-May and the last birds were seen on June 3rd.

There were no mid-summer records. Autumn passage lasted from July 8th, when there were six at Littlebrook (BWT), until Oct. 29th with over 300 birds appearing at 16 places. The largest groups were all on the Lower Thames, as with other terns in autumn: there were 62 at Tilbury on Sept. 17th (JMH), 60 at West Thurrock on Aug. 4th (MKD) and similar numbers at Littlebrook regularly during August (DD, AJM, RM). There were only three double-figure counts elsewhere, on well separated dates. King George V Res. had 16 on Aug. 3rd (PJV) which coincided with good numbers at West Thurrock and Littlebrook. On Aug. 27th there were 11 at Staines Res. (FRC). Finally, 11 arrived at Barn Elms Res. on Sept. 16th (RBH, PJS), the day before the Tilbury high count. There were three singles in early October and the last was one flying W at Staines Res. on Oct. 29th (JAS).

Inner London: River Thames at Hungerford Bridge, one flew upriver on Sept. 3rd (BJH *per* PJS).

255 Guillemot

K Northfleet, one picked up exhausted on Mar. 15th was taken into care and showed signs of recovery a week later (JMS).

This is the 22nd record for the London Area. The Thames-side locality is typical and the timing is reminiscent of the March records in 1983. Prior to that year, however, this species had not occurred any later in winter than January.

260 Little Auk

E King George V Res., one found dead and photographed on Nov. 15th (RL).

S Barn Elms Res., one flew W at roof-top height on Feb 15th (NPS).

These two records take the London Area total to 26. They fit the recent pattern well, with November as the most frequent month followed by February and October. There have now been five records in two years, the same number as in the two decades from 1960 to 1979.

261 Puffin

E Harlow, one picked up on Feb. 23rd was sent to the RSPCA at Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex (PG).

M Inner London: Holbein Place, SW1, a first-winter bird was picked up on Sept. 25th (*per* AGF). Its photograph subsequently appeared in *The London Standard*. It was suffering from enteritis and exhaustion but after treatment it was released off Portland Bill, Dorset, on Oct. 8th.

It may be that all the auks that occur in London appear as a result of sickness or harsh conditions at sea. Certainly these two Puffins were no exception, both requiring human aid to get back to the coast. It is remarkable that three species of auk should occur in one year, so soon after the wreck of 1983.

264 Stock Dove

At least 120 pairs were recorded from well over 40 localities during the breeding season, again an increase over the last three years. The maximum number of territories was 20 in Osterley Park (M), while the species was well distributed in Epping Forest and parts of Kent. An increase was noted in the Beddington area, but it was rather under-recorded from Herts. Outside the breeding season it was widely distributed in small flocks, the only three-figure counts were: Broadwater G.P., 150 in January, Thamesmead, 100 in February, Wraysbury G.P., up to 150 in the early part of the year, and again in November, and Horton Lodge, 298 on Dec. 2nd. There were no Inner London records.

Number of pairs in the breeding season.

<i>Essex</i>	<i>Herts.</i>	<i>Middx.</i>	<i>Bucks.</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Surrey</i>
35	12	31	—	23	20

265 Woodpigeon

By far the largest flocks occurred in the early part of the year with 8,000 flushed by a plane at Bulphan Fen on Jan. 29th and 3,000 at London Colney on Feb. 25th. At the close of the year c.1,500 flew W over Bookham on Nov. 12th, and this was echoed by similar movements on a smaller scale until the end of the year. Few comments on status were received, but it appears to be increasing in parts of Essex and in the Tadworth area of Surrey. Four territories were found in 96 acres of scrub and grassland at Bookham, while 11 pairs bred at Rye Meads S.F. Inner London: bred in St. James's Park.

266 Collared Dove

Fewer records than usual were received, with none at all from Inner London, where the species has been on the threshold of breeding for the last two years. Elsewhere the impression is of a slow increase in many areas particularly at suburban sites. A definite increase was reported from the Stanmore and Edgware area and a 40% increase in the Tadworth area. The species also bred in Kew Gardens for the first time. Three-figure flocks were reported as follows: Seeers Park, Cheam, 169 on Jan. 8th. Cooper's Green, 200 on Oct. 27th. Maple Cross S.F., up to 100 in October. Rye Meads S.F., 113 on Dec. 7th and 140 on Dec. 22nd.

267 Turtle Dove

The first birds of the year were singles at Rye Meads S.F. and Sevenoaks G.P. on Apr. 21st but most areas had their first birds during the next week. It was found in over 30 localities during the breeding season, but is clearly under-recorded in many areas. Only two pairs could be found in Epping Forest (ten in 1981) while in the Walton/Headley area of Surrey there was a 25% decline. Numbers appear to be stable at Bookham Common and Hainault; five pairs bred at Rye Meads S.F. and six pairs were present in the Chelsfield

area of Kent. Inner London: Regent's Park, singles on May 9th and 10th; four on Oct. 1st were the last birds of the year.

269 Ring-necked Parakeet

Recorded from all counties during the year, although none from Inner London. Its main strongholds appear to be in Middlesex and Kent, with very few birds in Essex and Herts. A decline was noted in one area of Kent and all such fluctuations should be noted so an accurate assessment of population trends can be made. All records are given, but those at the main sites are summarised.

- E Valentine's Park, singles on Nov. 17th and Dec. 29th (CGN). Wanstead Park, one on Dec. 16th (FRT).
- H Stocker's Lake, one on Aug. 21st and 22nd (RRD).
- M Little Britain Lake, up to two in January, three in February, singles in March, April and October (mo). Osterley Park, up to three in late February (TJD, DGH), one pair bred (DGH). Queen Mary G.P., present throughout the year, maximum of nine on Oct. 13th (HRG). Ravenscourt Park, five at roost on Oct. 29th (PWA). Sunbury, five regularly flying W to roost between September and December (SDBWS).
- B Wraysbury G.P., up to 52 roosting in January, one on Aug. 5th and up to five between November and December (mo).
- K Beckenham, up to nine present throughout the year (JDH). Bexley, one or two on many dates (SJG). Bromley, up to four flying to roost during the year (JDH *et al.*). Bromley Common, up to four during the year (PDG). Elmstead Woods, 24 on Aug. 5th and 28 on Nov. 10th (WTGB). Foots Cray Woods, one or two on many dates (SJG). Hither Green Cemetery (numbers were reported as being down on 1983) monthly maxima given below.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
40	59	35+	35+	35+	Present		51	0	0	48	52	(DD)

Kelsey Park, present all year, maximum of six on Dec. 12th (DCY, GDN). Langley Court, one pair at a nest-hole on Mar. 26th (BRG). Petts Wood, one or two from April to June (KHP). Pond Wood, Chislehurst, pair on May 12th (BRG).

- S Barn Elms Res., one flew N on Aug. 7th (RJS). Beddington Park, one on Dec. 19th (DAC). Carshalton, present during May and June (FMK). Fetcham, singles in May and from August to December (CK). Hersham S.F., two on Nov. 18th and one on Dec. 28th (WRI). Kew Gardens, up to six on many dates throughout the year (RBH). Wallington, one in November (KDGM). Walton-on-Thames, up to seven throughout the year flying to roost (CO). West Molesey, one on Aug. 24th (SDBWS).

1983 Additional Record

- M Ravenscourt Park, one on Sept. 18th (MJE).

271 Cuckoo

There was a widespread influx in mid-April, when several localities reported their first birds. Rye Meads S.F., Queen Mary G.P. and Buckland S.P. all reported the first birds of the year on Apr. 14th, and birds arrived in most areas within the next few days. It was reported in well over 80 localities during the breeding season, an increase of about 25% on 1983; it is clearly a widespread species away from the built-up urban areas of London. There were no reports of

any significant change of status, and many localities held five or more calling males by June. Confirmed breeding was reported from eight sites with several juvenile birds being seen from late July onwards. A 'brown-phase' bird was reported from Ickenham on May 17th — rufous-phase adult females are rare. Lingering birds were reported at several localities during September, with the last birds of the year at Norbury on Oct. 13th and an exceptionally late bird at the Tarn, Eltham on Nov. 4th.

Inner London: Regent's Park, singles on May 10th and 17th (TRDf).

274 Barn Owl

There was no improvement in the fortunes of this species with only ten records received. Two pairs, which may have bred, give some hope for the future; but away from Essex and Kent there were very few birds and this represents a substantial decline since the London Atlas. All records are given.

E Single pairs may have bred at North Ockendon (MJA) and Sewardstone (PRY). Ilford, one on Sept. 27th (MS). Loughton, one on Feb. 29th (EFCC).

H Haberdashers Girls School, one on Dec. 7th (SHM). Rye Meads S.F., one on Dec. 1st (RMRG).

M Laleham, one on Oct. 29th (J. Broomfield *per* CO).

K Littlebrook, one present all year (DRG). Near Dartford, one on Dec. 4th (Bwt).

S Malden Rushett, one on Jan. 11th (PWM).

1983 Additional Record

S Chessington Zoo/Malden Rushett area, one on Dec. 14th (PWM).

279 Little Owl

As in 1983 there was another slight increase in sites reporting this species — to at least 67 sites. At least 13 pairs bred successfully out of a total of 30, a similar position to last year. Most were found in Essex, Kent and Surrey, but relatively few in Middlesex. This confirms the impression that most of the breeding population occurs in the suburban and rural parts of the London Area. There were no Inner London records. Details of pairs in the breeding season are given below:

Essex	Herts.	Middx.	Bucks.	Kent	Surrey
12	3	1	0	8	6

280 Tawny Owl

The most widespread of the owls, being found in over 100 localities during the year. Over half of these held breeding birds or birds during the breeding season (48 pairs located) and many pairs bred successfully. It was described as fairly common in Epping Forest, and was reported regularly from many sites in Surrey and parts of Kent, indicating a healthy population in many areas. Seven pairs present in Osterley Park (M) was the maximum recorded, but there were no confirmed breeding records for Inner London this year.

Inner London: Barnsbury, resident. Dalston, E8 one on Jan. 20th (PAB). Aberdare Gardens, NW6, singles calling in March, October and November (DR). Lonsdale Square, one in December (TC). Kensington Gardens, singles on eight dates between Aug. 1st and Oct. 30th (EW).

Details of pairs and localities in the breeding season are given in the table below:

	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Herts.</i>	<i>Middx.</i>	<i>Bucks.</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Surrey</i>
Localities	9	15	20+	1	21	24
Pairs	10+	5	14	0	12	7

281 Long-eared Owl



See also Appendix I

Up to 12 birds were located in traditional roosts in Essex and Kent in the first winter period, although the degree of overlap between sites is not known. Six birds were present at four sites in the same counties from early December until the end of the year, continuing its status as a scarce winter visitor to the eastern part of the London Area. All records are given.

- E Dagenham Chase, two from Dec. 8th until the end of the year (MKD, RBH, JMH). Fairlop Plain, one on Dec. 1st (AB). Parndon Meads, one found dead on Feb. 3rd (AHS). Walthamstow Res., two roosting along the River Lea during January and February (AJGy *et al.*).
- K Dartford Marsh, up to seven from Jan. 14th to Feb. 12th (PEh, DD *et al.*), and one on Dec. 8th (DRG). Stone Wood, one or two in December (DRG). Woolwich area, up to three in January and February (PEh).

1983 Additional Record

- S Headley Heath, one on Dec. 1st was perched in a hawthorn bush (DBn).

282 Short-eared Owl

A mere six individuals remained in the Area in January, and only four in February, all north of the River Thames, reflecting the mild weather conditions and the low numbers at the end of 1983. A slight

passage was evident in late March when one bird was seen in Inner London. Lingered birds remained on the Thames marshes until May 24th, when the last was seen at West Thurrock.

Rainham claimed the first returning birds in late September and a small influx was apparent in late October and November. By the year's end at least 20 birds were present; half of these were concentrated in Essex. Monthly maxima and summarised records are given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Essex	4	3	6	1	2	2	6	13	13
Others	2	1	3	2	0	0	1	9	6
Total	6	4	9	3	2	2	7	22	19

- E** Berwick Ponds, one on Dec. 15th (MKD). King George V Res., one on Dec. 21st (JF). Nazeing Marsh, up to three from January to March (GJW). Rainham Marsh, two in January, two in February, four in March, one in April and May; two in late September, four in October increasing to ten in November and seven in December (MKD,CGN,JMH,RBH). Waltham Abbey, one on Mar. 6th (DCL). Walthamstow Res., two from October to December (TG). West Thurrock, one on May 24th (DCY).
- H** Abbots Langley, two on Jan. 22nd and one on Feb. 11th (AEG). Cheshunt G.P., one on Apr. 8th (SC). Hatfield Polytechnic, one flew SW on Nov. 13th (HPEG). Rye Meads S.F., one on Dec. 31st (RMRG).
- M** Brent Res., one picked up on Nov. 22nd later died of injuries (*per* NB) and one on Nov. 24th (RB). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Nov. 22nd (TJD). Staines Res., one on Mar. 11th (MP,RMW); one on Oct. 28th, Nov. 1st and 6th (CIB,JAS,MJW). Inner London: Conduit Street, W1, one flying SW over roof-tops mobbed by crows on Mar. 8th (MC).
- K** Blackheath, one on Mar. 29th (EWK). Dartford Marsh, up to three in December (RHT,RBH,SJG,DD).
- S** Beddington S.F., two on Nov. 13th (GDJM). Hersham G.P. area, one on Apr. 8th (RJH); singles on three dates in November and up to two on several dates in December (WRI,RJH,SJS).

1982 Additional Records

- M** Brent Res., one on Dec. 27th (CH). Inner London: The Strand, one flew E on Nov. 11th (PB).

284 Nightjar

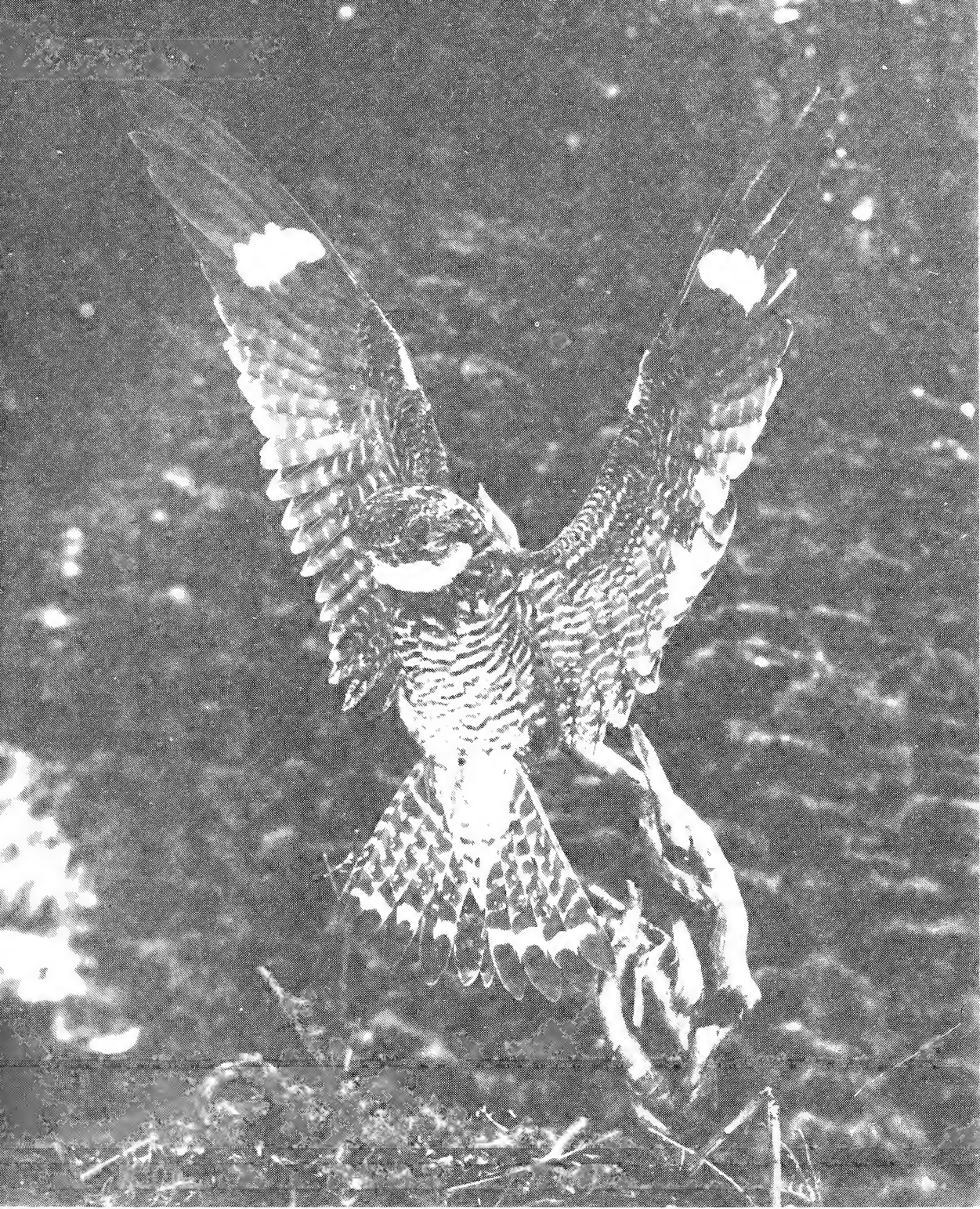
Only two pairs and one additional male were reported this year, making it the worst year since records began. Following more than a decade of serious decline, the species was absent from traditional sites in Surrey, and the last breeding site in Essex. The future, even at the two Herts. sites looks very bleak. All records are given.

- H** Two localities: Broxbourne Woods, first on May 6th (RNS), one pair plus a second male during June (GJW *et al.*), last heard on July 6th (JE). Locality withheld, one pair summered (GJW).

287 Common Nighthawk

- S** Barnes Common, an adult male found in a weakened state on Oct. 23rd, was taken into care but died on Oct. 28th (*per* MCD).

This remarkable record, the first American landbird to be recorded in the London Area, demonstrates that the unexpected can still happen! Initially identified by the RSPCA as a Nightjar it was put



ABOVE: Adult male Common Nighthawk found on Barnes Common in October 1984, and photographed as a mounted specimen (Photo: B. A. Marsh).

The distinguishing features from Nightjar, and most apparent in the photograph are:

- (a) more extensive white wing-patch, involving six primaries — compared with three in Nightjar.
- (b) almost complete white tail-bar (male Nighthawk only) — only apparent as patches at the side of the tail in Nightjar.
- (c) complete white throat patch (less marked in the female Nighthawk) — incomplete in Nightjar.
- (d) evenly barred breast and belly — more mottled in Nightjar.

Two other important distinguishing features not apparent in the photograph are its smaller size (mainly due to its much shorter tail) and the obviously forked tail.

into a freezer to be sent to a taxidermist. When MJCD came to collect it he realised that the bird was a Common Nighthawk, and arranged to have photographs taken, before letting the taxidermist take over.

Only the 12th ever for Britain; all records have occurred between Sept. 12th and Nov. 4th. It was only the fourth to occur away from the Scilly Isles and only the third mainland record, the others being in Nottinghamshire in October 1971 and Dorset in October 1983. This species is a common summer visitor to North America, and can be frequently observed in built-up areas (unlike our Nightjar). Whilst a sighting of a Common Nighthawk against the backdrop of St. Agnes lighthouse is one moment to savour, one flying round seven miles from St. Paul's Cathedral would have been the sighting of a lifetime.

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee. (See photograph opposite).

289 Swift

The first bird of the year, one at Broxbourne G.P. on Apr. 16th, was followed by a general arrival during the last week of April. 250 moved NE in one hour at Staines Res. on the 29th, and similar numbers were reported from several localities at the same time. During the first week of May there was a sizeable movement across the Area, the peak count was 1,500 at Hilfield Park Res. on May 6th which increased to 2,000+ on the 7th. Passage was still very much in evidence on May 19th when 850 moved NW at Staines Res. in 40 minutes. and on May 20th when 1,000 were at Wraysbury G.P. A white-rumped individual was seen at Wraysbury G.P. on May 11th — a pitfall for the unwary.

The few reports of breeding status all referred to a decline in numbers, particularly in parts of Kent and Surrey. There were no Inner London breeding records this year, although ten seen around tall buildings in Kensington High Street on May 17th were not seen subsequently and could have bred unnoticed nearby. Otherwise this aerial feeder was seen over several areas of Central London on many dates, the maxima being 30 over St. James's Park on May 29th, 20 over South Bermondsey on June 15th and up to 20 in the Vauxhall/Waterloo area on many dates.

Large mid-summer gatherings included 1,500 at Staines Res. on June 28th and up to 1,000 at Fairlop on July 14th and smaller flocks were widely reported until mid-August. Return passage was well under-way in late August, 1,000 at Longfield being by far the largest single movement, but birds lingered later than usual with September records from over 20 localities. The last birds of the year were seen well into October; singles at Tolworth on the 13th and Alexandra Park on the 18th.

293 Kingfisher

About 30 pairs were present during the breeding season, a similar position to last year, The majority were north of the River Thames particularly in Herts. Here its main stronghold appears to be in the Lea Valley, with up to four pairs in the Cheshunt G.P. area alone. It was widely recorded outside the breeding season when birds were seen in Inner London. Breeding pairs and Inner London records are given.

- E Successful pairs were reported from: Fishers Green (2), Nazeing, and Netherhall. One pair probably bred at Berwick Ponds, and a second pair bred, unsuccessfully, at Nazeing.
- H Pairs bred or probably bred at: Amwell G.P., Broxbourne G.P., Bowyers G.P., Cheshunt G.P. (4), Stanstead Abbots G.P., Stocker's Lake and Tyttenhanger G.P.
- M Pairs reported from: Brent Res., Broadwater G.P., Queen Mary G.P., West Drayton Common G.P. Inner London: Grand Union Canal at St. Pancras Lock, one on Dec. 26th (SH). Regent's Canal, one on Dec. 27th (IWG). Regent's Park, singles on Aug. 24th and Dec. 12th (TRDt).
- K Pairs bred at Ruxley G.P., Sevenoaks G.P. and probably bred at Horton Kirby.
- S One pair bred at Holmethorpe S.P. and another at Old Oxted. A pair attempted to breed at Hogsmill S.F. and possibly bred at Hersham and Watermeads.

297 Hoopoe

- E Rainham Marsh, one on Apr. 14th and 15th (MKD, JW *et al.*). Wm. Girling Res., one from May 6th to 9th, was also seen on the Middlesex side of the River Lea at Ponders End (ADS, GJW *et al.*).
- M Winchmore Hill, one on Apr. 16th (*per* RK).
- S East Croydon, one on Apr. 30th (JS).

As in 1983, four records constitute an above-average showing. All occurred in the period Apr. 14th to May 9th, the Essex records echoing those in the same county in 1980. The pattern of records over the past decade is shown below.

1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
5	3	2	2	1	3	1	2	4	4

298 Wryneck

- H Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on May 4th (HPM, WGL). Amwell G.P., one on Aug. 22nd (GJW). Cuffley, one from Aug. 26th to Sept. 10th (BG). Mill Green, one on Sept. 1st (PDW, BTS). Radlett, one on Aug. 31st (LO).
- K Eltham, one from Sept. 15th to 22nd (JW, PFA).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Aug. 24th (EDt).

An above-average showing with six autumn and one spring record. All the autumn records were in the period Aug. 22nd to Sept. 22nd, with a particularly noticeable concentration in Herts. Since regular breeding ceased in England numbers of migrants have fluctuated widely in the London Area as shown in the table below; this is the sixth consecutive year that one has appeared in spring.

1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
6	18	3	2	2	3	17	2	2	7

300 Green Woodpecker

Found in over 90 localities, and in three-quarters of these during the breeding season. Most were in Herts., Middx. and Surrey, and it remains very scarce in Kent and along the Thames-side parts of Essex. Over the rest of Essex it appears to be increasing, in particular Epping Forest where it was found in at least ten sites. This is in marked contrast to its relative scarcity in the early 1970s. An increase

was also noted on Wimbledon Common where there were ten territories (eight in 1983). There were no Inner London records for the first time in three years.

302 Great Spotted Woodpecker

Still the most widespread of the woodpeckers in the London Area reported from 114 localities during the year, and in 95 during the breeding season. It is commoner than the Green Woodpecker south of the River Thames, particularly in Surrey with, for example, 14 pairs on Wimbledon Common (ten in 1983). However it is far less widespread in parts of Essex, where the Green Woodpecker is at least as common. Although well known as a migrant at coastal observatories, it is not normally thought of as such in the London Area. However, a bird watched dropping out of the sky and settling in a small elder tree at West Thurrock on Aug. 27th, had clearly come from south of the River Thames, or beyond. There were only two Inner London records this year. Singles trapped and ringed on Sept. 2nd and Oct. 2nd in Regent's Park (JRW).

303 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

There was a marked increase in areas reporting this species with over 90 sites. Present in 60 of these during the breeding season, indicating a healthy population at least in some areas. However it remains scarce or under-recorded in Essex and parts of Surrey. At Bookham Common for example, there were again no definite territories located in either study area. Four pairs were found at both Hainault Forest and Hampstead Heath, while an increase was noted on Wimbledon Common with three pairs (two in 1983).

Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one pair near Lancaster Gate in late February (EW).

Localities in the breeding season.

<i>Essex</i>	<i>Herts.</i>	<i>Middx.</i>	<i>Bucks.</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Surrey</i>
7	23	15+	—	3+	15

310 Woodlark

H/M Broadwater G.P., one from Mar. 8th to 10th (RBH,IGJ), This bird proved extremely elusive during its stay, and was frequently seen in flight and crossed the River Colne into Herts on several occasions.

The first record for three years. Recent sightings suggest that there is a very weak passage through the London Area during March; four of the last nine records have been in this month.

311 Skylark

As in previous years, the few large flocks seen were confined to the east of London. Here 300 moved N over Bromley Common on Jan. 8th, 120 were present at Fairlop on Jan. 4th, 200 at Rainham Marsh on Jan. 21st and 200 at South Ockendon on Feb. 13th. The few breeding records included 15 singing in Osterley Park, 15 pairs on Dartford Marsh and 60 pairs on Rainham Marsh. As usual there was evidence of a westerly movement in late October at a number of localities, but on a small scale. Wintering numbers at the close of the year were also unremarkable with up to 200 at Rainham Marsh,

Fairlop, Berwick Ponds and Dartford Marsh. Inner London: Surrey Docks, five to eight pairs breeding, although none were reported in 1983.

313 Sand Martin

Although the first birds appeared as usual in late March, it soon became apparent that the species had suffered a disastrous decline since last autumn. The first bird was at Bedfont Quarry on Mar. 25th, followed by a trickle of birds in the last week of March, particularly in the Lea Valley. Very few arrived in the first two weeks of April, and most areas did not record their first birds until mid-April. Only three counts reached double figures at this time, and breeding sites were largely devoid of birds. By late April a slight passage was evident, with counts of 120 at Holmethorpe S.P. and 60 at Rye Meads S.F. on the 29th. This late passage continued well into May when up to 80 were present at Sevenoaks G.P. by the 21st. Some sites did not record this species at all during the spring, and everywhere the unanimous impression was one of exceptionally low numbers.

Breeding birds were also very late in arriving, and again numbers of occupied holes were well down on previous years, by as much as 60% in some areas (see below). At one Essex site, breeding birds were not back in strength until early June. They completely deserted the traditional site for two or three scattered colonies and totals were about 30% down here on 1983. Elsewhere all colonies showed some decline or were completely abandoned, and colonies should be carefully monitored to keep track of this decline.

Numbers returning at the start of the autumn passage in August were much larger than earlier in the year and gave some encouragement for the future. Several localities recorded double figure flocks, the maxima to the west of London being 200+ at Staines Res. on Sept. 7th and 200 at Perry Oaks S.F. on Sept. 21st. By far the largest concentrations, however, occurred in Essex. At King George V Res. 800+ on Sept. 9th had increased to 1,500 the next day, while at nearby Walthamstow Res. 600 on Sept. 9th increased to 1,100 by Sept. 20th. Even these numbers were eclipsed by the roosting flock at Rainham Marsh, which stood at 300 in mid-August, 1,000 by mid-September increasing to 2,000+ by Sept. 22nd with 100 still present on Oct. 7th. Many of the gravel pits in the Rainham/Upminster area held up to 200 feeding birds at this time. The last birds of the year were ten, still at Rainham Marsh, on Oct. 13th.

Inner London: no records were received.

Breeding colonies are given below.

- E Fishers Green, five pairs nested. Lea Valley Reservoirs, reduction in numbers breeding. South Stifford, 100 pairs breeding, a 30% reduction. Rainham G.P. area, ten pairs. Roydon, 30 pairs.
- H Broxbournebury G.P., 35 occupied holes. New Parkbury G.P., 60 occupied holes. Tyttenhanger G.P., 10 occupied holes by July.
- S Apps Court Farm, Chessington, five nests. Buckland S.P., two or three pairs only, well down on last year. Field Common, six occupied holes by May 13th. Godstone N.R., 40 pairs. Hogsmill S.F., five or six pairs, a reduction of about 50 to 60%. Holmethorpe S.P., 25 holes occupied.

314 Swallow

The first birds were two at Foots Cray Meadows on Mar. 28th, followed by others at several localities during the next few days. There was a general arrival from the end of the first week of April, when the species became more widespread, and most breeding birds had returned by the end of the third week. As with the Sand Martin there were few large movements during April until a late passage that began in the last few days of the month and continued until the end of May. Large counts at this time included 150+ at Tadworth on Apr. 29th and 250 at Stocker's Lake on May 3rd, declining to 180 on May 25th and 100 two days later. Few reports on changes of breeding numbers were reported, apart from a reduction in the Surbiton area of Surrey. Return passage began earlier than usual in mid-July, and several flocks of up to 200 were a feature of the early autumn. The heaviest movement occurred between mid-September and early October, and included 300 in 90 minutes over Epsom and Walton Downs on Sept. 13th, 300+ at Queen Mary Res. two days later, 300 SSW in one hour at West Wickham on Sept. 29th and 300+ at Rainham Marsh on Oct. 7th. Very few were seen after the third week of October and there was only one November record, the last bird of the year, on the 4th at Wraysbury G.P.

Inner London: Regent's Park, the first bird was on Apr. 15th and the last on Oct. 8th.

316 House Martin

One at Walthamstow Res. on Mar 31st was the first of the year, but it was late April before the species had appeared in any numbers. There was a slight passage in the first week of May, when flocks of up to 500 appeared in several places. This passage continued well into the month, 600+ at both Stocker's Lake and Walton Res. on May 28th, and the same number at Staines Res. the next day being the largest counts. The paucity of records from some areas was reflected in breeding numbers throughout the Area. Many observers commented on reduced breeding numbers, particularly south of the River Thames. In Surrey reports of decreases came from Burgh Heath, where half the usual numbers were present, and in the Tadworth area there was an 80% drop in breeding pairs. Elsewhere numbers had fallen in the Hampstead/Highgate area of Middlesex and in the Downe Village area of Kent.

Return passage got underway in August, with a heavy movement at Stonehill Farm, Willington in mid-month. Over 300 birds were ringed out of a total of well over 1,000 on Aug. 12th and 19th, indicating a substantial passage through the Area. Several counts in excess of 500 were a feature of much of September, with maxima of 1,000 at Staines Res. on Sept. 7th, 1,000 at Queen Mary Res. on Sept. 23rd and 2,500 at Wraysbury Res. the next day. 1,000 moved SSW in one hour over West Wickham on Sept. 29th, while 1,000+ were found clinging to buildings and sitting on wires during heavy rain at Old Oxted on Sept. 30th. High numbers continued to be reported into October, with 1,100 at Barn Elms Res. on Oct. 3rd and 5th, but most had departed by the end of the second week. The last was one at Batlers Green, Radlett, on Oct. 29th.

Inner London: Only 41 nests were located, although the Knights-

bridge colony (SW7) was known to be occupied (although unreported) and held at least 20 nests during 1985. Beaumont Avenue, W14, seven nests. Challoner Street, W14, five nests. Comeragh Road, W14, 25 nests (30 in 1980). Palliser Road, W14, one nest at a new site. Thomas More Street, E1, three nests, plus nine occupied by House Sparrows.

Up to 20 seen in various parts of Inner London from Apr. 17th until the latest of the year in Regent's Park on Oct. 29th.

320 Tree Pipit

A decrease was noted in the reported number of breeding pairs. The overall total was 70 pairs at 18 sites, compared with over 80 last year at 27 sites. The first record in spring was one at Holmethorpe S.P. on Apr. 3rd and the last two were seen at Headley Heath on Sept. 16th. Breeding season distribution is given, totals in brackets refer to singing males (where known).

- E Childerditch (1), Dagnam Park (5), Epping Forest (20), Hainault Forest (8), North Weald (5).
- H Bishop's Wood (4), Broxbourne Wood (3), Derry's Wood (3), Mymmshall Wood (1), Northaw Great Wood (3), Potwells (1+), Radwell Wood (1), Symondshyde (2) and Wormley Wood (6). Breeding proved at Broxbourne and Northaw.
- M Ruislip Common (1).
- B Black Park, present in suitable breeding habitat.
- K Present at High Elms in April and May, but not at Joyden's Wood.
- S Ashstead Common, a pair with young as well as an additional male. Banstead/Walton Heaths (5), Headley Heath (7), Wimbledon Common (3).

322 Meadow Pipit

As in previous years Essex held the highest number of breeding pairs, with Surrey coming second in numbers. Evidence of heavy passage was noted in late March and also from late September to early October. Breeding season distribution and Inner London records are given.

- E Thames Marshes between Tilbury and Barking, at least 70 pairs were present. The inland stretch from Stifford to Berwick Ponds held a minimum of 17 pairs.
- H One pair bred at Hertford Heath and another was present at Cooper's Green.
- M Present in the breeding season on Staines Moor. Inner London: singles on Nov. 15th in St. James's Park and Jan. 27th at Shoreditch.
- K Pairs present at Dartford Marsh, High Elms and Thamesmead.
- S Wimbledon Common, 11 pairs. Hersham, one pair. Riddlesdown, one pair. Inner London: Surrey Docks, three pairs present, one pair bred; 30 on Sept. 23rd.

324a Rock Pipit

- E On the Thames foreshore between Rainham, West Thurrock and Tilbury, a maximum of ten was present in January and seven in December, also five were counted during February and March. Singles occurred at Wm. Girling Res. on Mar. 11th and 18th, King George V Res. on Mar. 26th, Sept. 22nd and Nov. 24th, Netherhall G.P., on Apr. 9th and Oct. 13th with three on Apr. 6th and Walthamstow Res. on Mar. 14th.

- H Hilfield Park Res., one or two from Mar. 14th to 22nd. Rye Meads S.F., one during January, one from Oct. 12th to the 13th and another from Oct. 26th to 28th.
- M Queen Mary Res., one on Oct. 10th. Staines Res., two on Mar. 7th, one showing characters of the *littoralis* race, singles on Apr. 9th, Oct. 1st and 25th, and Nov. 11th.
- B Queen Mother Res., one on Nov. 25th.
- K Dartford Marsh, between three and six from January to April, and between three and four in November and December. Swanscombe, between three and four at both ends of the year.
- S Barn Elms Res., singles on Feb. 29th, Mar. 30th, 31st and from Apr. 5th to the 11th; in autumn one or two between Sept. 21st and Nov. 4th, with a maximum of eight on Oct. 7th.

324b Water Pipit

- E Netherhall G.P., one on Apr. 8th (AG). Rainham Marsh, two were present from January to March, and three on Apr. 8th (MKD). Berwick Ponds, two on Apr. 14th (JMH). King George V Res., one on Mar. 16th and two on Apr. 18th (GJW). Wm. Girling Res., two on Mar. 11th and one on the 18th (PJV).
- H Amwell G.P., one on Mar. 11th. Broxbourne G.P., one on Apr. 11th and 12th (GJW). Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 1st (PAW). Rye House Marsh, two on Apr. 7th and one on the 8th (MJB,GJW). Rye Meads S.F., up to three from January to March, four on Apr. 1st and the last on Apr. 14th (GJW *et al.*), one on Oct. 27th remained until the end of the year (RMRG). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Apr. 7th (RNS). Stocker's Lake, singles on Mar. 10th and Nov. 29th (RRD,AEG). Stocker's Farm, one on Apr. 2nd (ART).
- M Brent Res., two on Oct. 6th (LAB). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Oct. 18th (IGJ). Springwell Watercress Beds, one on many dates between January and Apr. 1st (RRD,ART *et al.*).
- K Woolwich, one on Nov. 13th (PJS).
- S Beddington S.F., singles during January and on Mar. 4th, then on four later dates, the last sighting was on Apr. 5th (SJG,KDGM *et al.*). At the end of the year, one in late October and two on Dec. 7th (GDJM *et al.*). Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 5th (NPS). Hogsmill S.F., one or two from Jan. 1st to Feb. 11th and one in November and December (WRI).

325 Yellow Wagtail

The first arrival was on Mar. 30th at Walthamstow Res., but the main passage took place between Apr. 8th and 15th. Autumn peaks were between Aug. 15th to 20th, and from Sept. 8th to 12th, the last bird was seen on Oct. 17th at Barn Elm Res. Breeding season distribution is given; also birds exhibiting characters of the Blue-headed (*flava*) and Grey-headed (*thunbergi*) races, as well as a winter record.

- E On the Thames Marshes and in the Lea Valley, usually the stronghold of this species, a distinct fall in numbers of breeding birds was noted, and compared with previous years a decrease of 50% was probable. Away from these areas there were five pairs each reported from Fairlop and Ockendon (MKD,CGN). *Flava* males during April and May were seen at Fairlop, King George V Res., Netherhall, Sewardstone and Walthamstow Res. (JF,GJW *et al.*).
- H Breeding was reported at Amwell, Broxbourne, Cole Green,

Cooper's Green, London Colney, Stanstead Abbots G.P., Tyttenhanger G.P. and Rickmansworth (TRD,JHT,GJW *et al.*). A *flava* male was at Hilfield Park Res. on May 14th (MJE).

M Two pairs bred at Queen Mary Res. and could have bred at Staines Res. and Perry Oaks S.F. (HRG,GCG *et al.*). Wraysbury Res., a *flava* male on May 1st (CDRH). Inner London: Regent's Park, four on Aug. 25th, and singles on Sept. 1st and Oct. 11th (TRDt).

K Pairs were reported from Dartford Marsh and Crossness, where there was a male *flava* on May 3rd (DRG,PEh *et al.*).

S Beddington S.F., five or six breeding pairs were present, one pair of which may have involved a male *flava* which was seen feeding young. It stayed until Sept. 12th (KDGM,GDJM *et al.*). Barn Elms Res., one on May 10th showing characters of *thunbergi* (DGHM,NPS), and a female *flava* was seen on May 17th (RBH). Beddington S.F., a first-winter bird that appeared on Dec. 4th was still present in January 1985 (GDJM *et al.*). This is only the third time that this summer visitor has wintered in the London Area, the two previous occasions (1956/57 and 1960/61) both involved the same locality. Inner London: Surrey Docks, two pairs were present in the breeding season, although less breeding habitat exists now than in the past (DAM).

327 Grey Wagtail

E Walthamstow Res., three pairs reared young. Single pairs also successfully nested at Barking, Chingford, Roydon and Waltham Abbey. Pairs were also present in the breeding season at Nazeing and Romford. There were up to ten in December at the Lea Valley Reservoirs.

H Pairs bred at Broxbourne and Croxley Hall Farm. Six wintered at Rye Meads S.F. during January and February.

M Brent Res., two or three pairs bred. Adults were feeding young at Hampstead Heath and Bell Wharf, Harefield. Pairs were seen in the breeding season at Bentley Priory, Denham Lock, Wood Green Res. and Uxbridge. Inner London: No breeding season records, but at least eight individuals were seen at up to ten localities during the winter periods.

K A pair bred at Foots Cray Meadows and breeding may have occurred at Ruxley G.P. and Beckenham.

S River Wandle, four pairs were present, one pair bred. Breeding was proved on the Hogsmill River at Kingston and Malden, also at Hogsmill S.F., Barn Elms Res., Godstone Res. and the River Mole at Leatherhead. Other sites where breeding may have occurred were Old Oxted, Holmethorpe S.P. and Wimbledon Common. Barn Elms Res., seven on Oct. 13th.

328a Pied Wagtail

Numerous and well distributed, no apparent change in status. Counts in excess of 100, roosts and Inner London records are given.

E Rainham Marsh, 120 on Oct. 7th and 150 on Dec. 15th.

H Maple Cross S.F., 150 on July 11th. Mill Green, 116 on Feb. 25th and 105 on Nov. 3rd. Rye Meads S.F., 128 on Jan. 15th and 200 on Dec. 29th.

M Inner London: County Hall, a pair bred on the roof. Also up to three were seen in five other localities.

K A roost at Dunton Green held 520 on Jan. 12th, 620 on the 19th, 540 on Feb. 7th, 660 on the 20th, 108 on Sept. 19th and 448 on Dec. 21st.

Orpington Civic Hall, 300 roosting in January and February. Sevenoaks G.P., 200+ on Nov. 8th and Dec. 9th.

- S Redhill, a roost of 300 in the town centre. Walton-on-Thames, 150 roosting in tree throughout December.

328b White Wagtail

An average year with two autumn records.

- E Reported from Mar. 31st to May 5th at the Lea Valley Reservoirs and Rainham Marsh with a maximum of three on two dates at King George V Res. (MKD, JF *et al.*). Rainham Marsh one on Oct. 7th (MKD).
- H Cheshunt G.P., singles on Mar. 31st and Apr. 7th (HM). Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Apr. 14th (HPM). Stocker's Lake, four on Mar. 24th, two on Apr. 5th and one on Apr. 10th (JE, ART).
- M Staines Res., two on Apr. 9th (MJE). Singles at Alexandra Park, Osterley Park, Queen Mary Res. and Staines Res. between Apr. 7th and 27th (HRG, APBR *et al.*).
- K Sevenoaks G.P., a single from Apr. 1st to 12th (RHT, JT).
- S Barn Elms Res., four on Apr. 17th (NPS), otherwise one or two from Mar. 30th to May 14th (RBH *et al.*). Beddington S.F., two on Sept. 7th (KDGM). Holmethorpe S.P., one from Apr. 11th to the 16th (JDF).

331 Wren

Some evidence of a decrease in numbers was noted, but few comparisons can be made owing to less coverage than in 1983.

- H Stocker's Lake, 29 pairs bred. Rye Meads S.F., counts of 15 on Jan. 15th and 18 on Feb. 12th. Maple Cross S.F., the maximum count was 20 on July 29th.
- M Osterley Park, 14 territories, a decrease from previous years. Kensal Green Cemetery, 12 pairs. Ruislip Local Nature Reserve, ten pairs bred. West Drayton Common G.P., 39 singing on May 4th. Inner London: reported from eight localities and known to have bred in Kensington Gardens, where there were an additional six singing birds. St. James's Park, up to five singing in the spring.
- K A survey in Scadbury Park, Chislehurst, revealed 14 singing on Apr. 20th. Ruxley G.P., 18 counted on Nov. 19th.
- S Bookham Common, 32 territories in 96 acres of scrub and grassland. Headley Heath, 30 singing on Apr. 28th. Beddington S.F., up to 15 singing between April and July.

333 Dunnock

Contrasting estimates were received, suggesting a decrease in some areas and an increase in others. Sample counts and a summary of Inner London records are given.

- H Maple Cross S.F., a maximum of 20 on June 30th. Rye Meads S.F., 33 on Jan. 15th and at least nine pairs bred.
- M Osterley Park, five territories in the census plot, compared with ten in 1983. Inner London: reported in nine localities; one pair bred at New River Walk, N1, and breeding probably took place at two other sites.
- S Bookham Common, 13 territories in 96 acres of scrub and grassland.

336 Robin

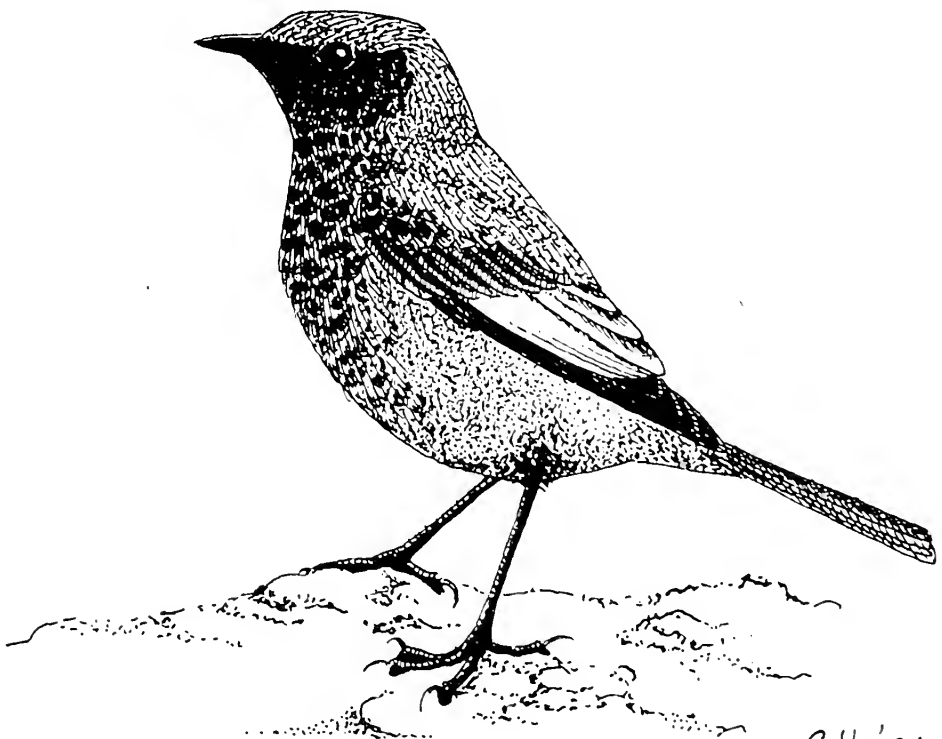
There was a slight increase in records received, but less came from Inner London.

- H Maple Cross S.F., the maximum count was 15 on Sept. 15th. Rye Meads S.F., at least six pairs bred.
- M Osterley Park, 20 territories on the census plot, an increase compared with 17 in 1983. Inner London: probably bred in at least four localities.
- K The maximum count was 21 at Beckenham on Feb. 10th.
- S Bookham Common, 58 territories were located in 40 acres of oakwood and 96 acres of scrub and grassland, this compares with 46 in 1983, 48 in 1982 and 1981, and 81 in 1979. Headley Heath, 34 singing on Apr. 22nd.

338 Nightingale

A marginal increase on 1983 was noted with 29 singing birds compared with 21 in 1983.

- E Epping Forest, at least six singing males present (PAB, AJGy *et al.*). Hainault Forest, eight singing males, three pairs bred (MKD).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one pair bred; also singing was noted at Bayford, Broxbourne Woods, Croxley Mill, and Northaw Great Wood (RNS, GJW *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., one trapped on June 30th (RRG).
- K Dartford Heath, one pair present throughout July, at least one juvenile was seen, the first breeding here for five years (Bwt). Thamesmead, a singing male on May 5th (PEH).
- S Bookham Common, two territories in 96 acres of scrub and grassland, as well as five singing males adjacent to the Grange Hotel (DAB, GB). Singing birds were also heard at Croydon and Hinchley Wood (JGt, SDBWS *et al.*).

342 Black Redstart

Ctt '84

A probable increase of nine to ten pairs in the breeding population. Seen at 20 localities on spring passage from Mar. 27th, and at six in autumn from Sept. 15th to Nov. 28th. Birds were seen during the winter at Amwell G.P., Barn Elms Res., Beddington S.F., Drayton Park, Kempton Park, Maple Cross S.F., Osterley Park, Staines Res. and Woolwich/Greenwich. Distribution of pairs and singing males in the breeding season is given.

	<i>Pairs proved breeding</i>	<i>Other pairs present</i>	<i>Additional singing males</i>	<i>Observers</i>
E Beckton Gas Works	3			KB
Chingford Warehouse		1		RSJ
Stratford			2	DFH
M Brimsdown		1	1	PJV
Drayton Park			1	CBA
North Acton			2	PJCr
Inner London:				
Blackfriars			3	RJE
Broad Street			1	MRC
Mount Pleasant, WC1			1	DAB,DJM
Royal Oak, W2			1	LH
K Littlebrook Power Station	4			AJM
Northfleet Power Station		1		RFS
S Croydon			1	PJSr
Sutton			1	SJG
Waddon			1	PJSr
Inner London:				
Bankside Power Station			1-2	MO
Battersea Power Station			2	RJE
Waterloo			1	IC
<i>Totals</i>	7	3	20	

343 Redstart

Present in three known breeding localities in summer, which is a slight improvement, although there was no proof of breeding. A summary of records is given.

- E Epping Forest two singing males in summer (MKD). Hainault Forest, one singing male was the first here since 1970 (MKD). Woodford Green, one on May 19th (KM). Harlow, one on Apr. 26th (RWB). In autumn one at Hainault Forest on Sept. 1st (MKD).
- H Northaw Great Wood, a pair in May and June (BJPW *et al.*). Singles at Cooper's Green G.P., Darlands Lake and Rye Meads S.F. between Apr. 14th and May 5th (MJE, RMRG, SP *et al.*). Rye Meads S.F., one on Sept. 8th (RMRG).
- M Singles on spring passage on Apr. 15th at Kempton Park Res. and on May 19th at Hounslow (DGH, AVM, PN). In autumn singles reported from Sept. 1st to Oct. 17th at Kempton Park Res., Eastcote, Queen Mary G.P., Mill Hill and Staines Res. (HRG, WAH *et al.*).
- B Wraysbury G.P., one from Sept. 13th to 15th (RRG).
- K Singles in autumn at Hither Green Cemetery on Sept. 26th and Orpington on Oct. 22nd (DD, EHJ).
- S Singles in spring between Apr. 4th and 18th at Barnes, Beddington S.F., Fetcham, Ham, Horton Country Park and Richmond Park (JRSA, AA, RJS *et al.*). Autumn passage was less marked than during

the spring and extended from Aug. 17th to Oct. 7th at Barn Elms Res., Bletchingley, Buckland S.P., Mitcham Common and Woodmansterne (PEJ, PJS *et al.*).

1978 Additional Record

M Bentley Priory, two on Sept. 2nd (GMH).

1983 Additional Record

K Greenwich Park, one on Sept. 12th (ASW).

344 Whinchat

The sole proof of breeding appears to be one adult with two juveniles at Bromley Common on June 14th and 15th. Pairs present at Fairlop and Rainham may have bred. The first in spring were on Apr. 15th and 16th at six localities, the only Inner London record was at Regent's Park on Apr. 25th. May passage was rather thin; the last was at Barn Elms Res. on the 29th. One was also at Barn Elms Res. on July 5th and probably marked the start of the autumn passage. Few appeared in early August and the main passage was noticed from Aug. 11th onwards, with no more than five seen at any locality. September saw the main movements of birds with a maximum of 12 at Rainham Marsh on the 9th. Between four and seven were reported from ten areas in mid-month with a steady flow until the end of September. The last was seen at Alexandra Park on Oct. 7th.

345 Stonechat

There was a maximum of 38 breeding pairs reported, which is a further increase from 32 in the previous year; Essex holds the majority. The highest wintering numbers were at Rainham Marsh with ten in December.

E Single pairs bred at Nazeing, Purfleet and Tilbury, five pairs at West Thurrock and two pairs each at Barking and Hornchurch. Rainham Marsh, 16 pairs present, most bred successfully.

M Kensal Green Cemetery, two or three pairs nested and at least one female was seen with young. Hounslow Heath, a possible breeding pair in July.

K Dartford Marsh, one pair bred. Elmers End S.F., two pairs with young. Littlebrook Nature Park, two pairs possibly bred. Thamesmead, two pairs present, not known to have bred.

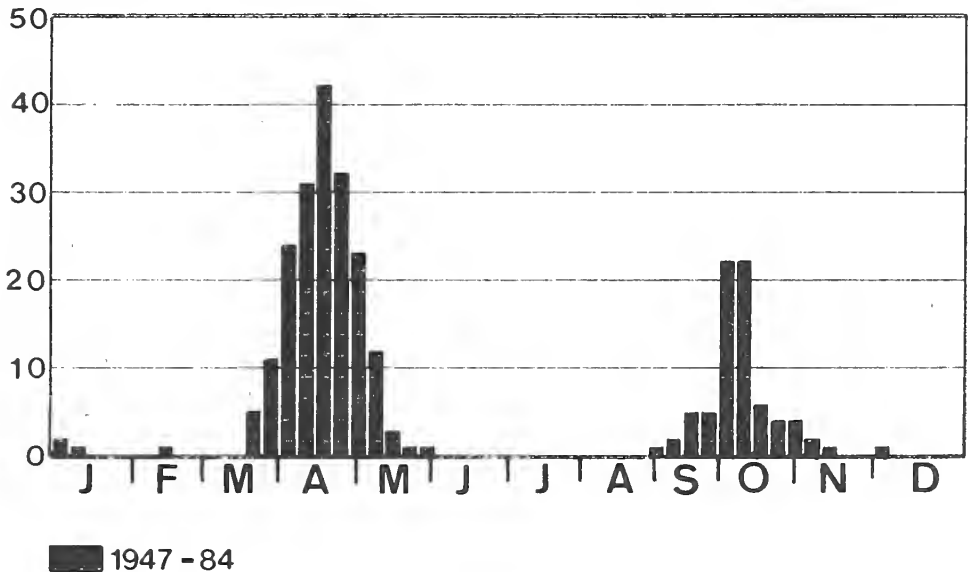
S Single pairs bred at Beddington S.F. and Ham Lands. Three pairs were seen at Mitcham Common, but only one was known to have nested.

346 Wheatear

From the arrival of the first on Mar. 15th at Barking, records came for every date until the end of the month. There were few days in April on which at least one was not reported, up to seven were seen on the 12th at London Airport, Beddington S.F., Barn Elms and Walthamstow Reservoirs. The May passage was fairly frequent and continued to the end of the month, including sightings of birds resembling the Greenland race *leucorrhoa* at Broxbourne on the 4th and Barn Elms Res. on the 19th. Although there were lingering individuals in three localities in June until the 17th, there was no suggestion of breeding; however one of these birds showed characters of the Greenland race. Three on July 30th at Perry Oaks S.F. began the autumn passage which was well reported and appeared to

indicate peaks around mid-August with 15 at Walthamstow Res. and 12 at Fairlop. The highest count was 18 at London Airport on Aug. 22nd. The only record for Inner London was at Waterloo on Aug. 7th. September sightings were lower than usual with only 21 birds in ten areas. October saw eight birds at five localities but well scattered in distribution. The last sightings were at London Airport on Oct. 24th and Nov. 8th.

359 Ring Ouzel



The above histogram depicts all records (269 in all) of Ring Ouzel from 1947-84 and, as befits a summer visitor that does not actually breed in our Area, the peaks are remarkably precise. Spring records spread from Mar. 19th to May 28th and autumn ones from Sept. 1st to Nov. 17th. The best week during spring was between Apr. 16th and 22nd, with 42 records, and the best two weeks in autumn from Oct. 1st to 14th, with 22 records in each week.

- E Dagnam Park, one on May 4th (AJG). Rainham Marsh, one on Apr. 30th (JMH). Walthamstow Res., one from Mar. 29th to Apr. 30th (PF, PL *et al.*).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one from Oct. 14th to 18th (MJF, PT *et al.*). Hilfield Park Res., one on Apr. 11th (CIB). Rye Meads S.F., one on May 1st (RMRG).
- M Muswell Hill Golf Course, one on Apr. 11th (MMH *per* J. H. Marchant). Inner London: Regent's Park, four on Apr. 19th (JPW).
- B Wraysbury G.P., one on Apr. 29th (MJR).
- S Beddington S.F., one on Apr. 20th (JBT). Chessington, one on Apr. 28th (GDC, PS). Sears Park, Cheam, one on Apr. 9th (SWG). Norbury Park, one on May 2nd (Cst).

A good year with 13 records, but in no way comparable with the bumper crop of 25 in 1977; as usual spring records outnumbered autumn ones although the one autumn record does look rather lonely. The count of four is not unprecedented; three having been seen together on many occasions, four were seen together at Beddington S.F. in April 1974 and ten were together at Walton Heath in October 1951. However even these counts are made to look positively puny when compared with the total of 20 seen at Highgate Ponds on Oct. 14th 1971 — a figure that will probably never be surpassed.

360 Blackbird

- E Berwick Ponds, an influx of 110 on Nov. 25th.
 H Rye Meads S.F., maximum 53 on Jan. 15th. Maple Cross S.F., maxima of 40 on Feb. 23rd and Nov. 10th.
 M Osterley Park, 15 territories on census plot. Kensal Green Cemetery, a fall of 33 on Oct. 13th. Inner London: bred in Bow Churchyard, Lincoln's Inn Fields, New River Walk, N1, Regent's Park, St. James's Park, Kensington Gardens, and Tower of London, amongst other localities.
 K Influxes reported in January from Bromley Common, and in December from Crofton Heath, Hither Green and Ruxley G.P.
 S Bookham Common, 22 territories in 96 acres of scrub and grassland. Holmethorpe S.P., 43 on Dec. 16th.

364 Fieldfare

From Jan. 22nd, after blizzard conditions in the north of Britain, there were widespread cold weather movements reported at no less than 30 localities. 1,000 or more were counted at Osterley Park and Walthamstow Res., and over 500 at Barn Elms Res., Beddington S.F., Chessington, Bromley Common, Hayes, Knockholt and Rye Meads S.F. Numbers remained high in February and included a roost of 2,400 near Stocker's Lake and 1,500 at Maple Cross S.F. There were 800 at Beddington S.F., 900 at Bromley Common on the 4th and 5th, and many estimates of around 500 were reported throughout the Area. In March there were still several flocks of between 200 and 300, also 600 at Osterley Park and Stocker's Lake, 800 at Maple Cross S.F. and 770 at Bromley Common. On Apr. 10th c.500 flew N in three hours over Mitcham Common, but numbers dwindled thereafter, 130 at Plumstead Marshes and a few similar numbers being seen until the most at the end of the month was 34 at Pebble Combe on Apr. 29th. 17 were still at this site on May 3rd; the last birds of the spring were at Mill Hill on May 14th (1), Barnes Common on May 18th (2) and Alexandra Park on May 21st (1). A single bird, perhaps the same individual, was seen at the latter locality on June 21st (DPY). This is only the fourth mid-summer record of this species in the London Area, the possibility of a future breeding attempt should be borne in mind.

The first of the autumn were two on Aug. 18th at Brent Res. (ASMS); however the only September record was of one on the 22nd at Bexley. On Oct. 6th two were seen at Rye Meads S.F., and the following day c.500 flew W at Holmethorpe S.P., but smaller numbers were generally noticed until late November, when a few flocks of up to 200 were reported. 500 at Harlow in late November and early December were only exceeded by 1,000 at Dartford Marsh on Dec. 8th.

365 Song Thrush

Sample counts were given in the breeding season of ten pairs at Rye Meads S.F., and four territories at Bookham Common. There was evidence of an influx in late October and early December, but in no case did numbers exceed 50.

- M Inner London: breeding season reports came from Regent's Park, St. James's Park, Lambeth Palace Gardens and Lincoln's Inn Fields.

366 Redwing

Before the cold spell began in late January there were flocks of up to 200 already present in several places, the maximum being 550 at Bromley Common on Jan. 8th. However there was a noticeable increase in numbers after Jan. 20th with more movements being reported; 800 at Osterley Park on Jan. 30th and 400 at Walton Bridge on Jan. 28th were good examples. During February there were 600 at Stocker's Lake on the 27th and 500 at Banstead on the 5th, plus several flocks of up to 300 elsewhere. In March there were 1,000 at Foots Cray Meadows on the 17th and numbers at several localities reached 300. In April 235 still remained at Bromley Common on the 8th and 350 moved N over Cheshunt G.P. on the 2nd, otherwise most places showed a decline. Five were reported in May, four on the 8th at Tadworth (S) and one on the 28th at Hampton Court Park (M). There was a single June record of one at Springfield Park, E5, on the 22nd and 29th (MTR), this is only the seventh mid-summer sighting in London, breeding remains a possibility.

From Sept. 25th onwards movements in autumn built up and after a heavy passage on Oct. 6th, which was reported from at least six localities, a good distribution was evident. November figures were fairly normal with the exception of a roost at Little Parndon (E) which rose to 1,200 on the 29th and then a most spectacular 5,660 in early December. There were 1,000 at Dagenham Park (E) on Nov. 25th and 800 at Jubilee Park, Bromley (K) on Dec. 5th. Inner London: reported from eight localities in the first three months with a maximum of 53 at Victoria Park on Jan. 23rd.

367 Mistle Thrush

At the end of the breeding season, counts included 38 at Bromley Common (K) on June 29th, 40 at Tyttenhanger G.P. (H) on Aug. 19th, 50 at Gatton Park (S) on June 28th and 20 at Hampstead Heath on Aug. 17th. There were similar counts around this period until October. At Wimbledon Common an estimate of 25 breeding pairs was made. Inner London: bred in St. James's Park, Kensington Gardens and Regent's Park.

H Cassiobury Park, the xanthocroic individual which has been reported for the last two years, was present all year.

369 Cetti's Warbler

H In the Lea Valley, one on several dates from Jan. 18th to Mar. 28th (MJH); at a different locality one on Feb. 18th, Mar. 4th and 31st, and Sept. 29th, Nov. 11th, Dec. 2nd and 29th; one near the above locality on July 26th (CCL, MJH, HPM, GJW).

S Epsom Common, one heard to sing one phrase on Oct. 23rd at Great Stew Pond (SJH, RES).

This species is just about maintaining a toehold in our Area, although now it is mainly a scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

373 Grasshopper Warbler

A further reduction in numbers. Only one pair known to have bred and at least seven other singing males in the breeding season. Five migrants in April and one at the end of July. All records are given.

E West Thurrock, one singing on Apr. 22nd, May 6th and June 10th.

- H Broxbourne G.P., one on Apr. 24th to 30th. Broxbourne Woods, two males on June 30th, one on July 6th and at least one on July 30th. Rye Meads S.F., three on Apr. 25th. Stanstead Abbots G.P., one on Apr. 23rd and two reeling until July.
- K Hayes, one pair bred at Brook Wood. Hoblingwell Wood, one singing on July 29th.
- S Ashted Common, one or two reported on several dates from May 12th to July 11th. Epsom Common, one singing at the east side on Apr. 20th.

378 Sedge Warbler

The approximate number of territories reported during the breeding season was 92 in Essex, 129 in Herts., 14 in Middx., 30 in Bucks., ten in Kent and nine in Surrey.

It is not possible to compare these figures with those for 1983 as counts were not available for some localities, but taking 11 of the more important sites for which figures are available the totals are 220 for 1984 compared with 256 for 1983. As regards migrants HRG reported a disastrous year at Queen Mary G.P. with only two spring records and 14 bird/days in autumn. Localities with ten or more territories (totals in brackets) and all Inner London records are given.

- E Berwick Ponds (10), Fishers Green (27), Nazeing (10), Netherhall (14) and Walthamstow Marsh (17).
- H Amwell G.P. (12), Broxbourne G.P. (15), Cheshunt G.P. (56) and Rye Meads S.F. (31).
- M Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Apr. 18th, three on Apr. 19th, two on May 5th and two on May 24th. St. James's Park, one singing on June 6th and again on Aug. 16th at the same spot.
- B Wraysbury G.P. (30).

382 Reed Warbler

The approximate number of territories reported during the breeding season was 176 in Essex, 92 in Herts., 43 in Middx., 40 in Bucks., 30 in Kent and 11 in Surrey. The total of 392 compares with 349 in 1983. Localities with ten or more territories (totals in brackets), Inner London records and breeding or suspected breeding near Inner London are given.

- E Berwick Ponds (35), Fishers Green (25), Hornchurch (10), Rainham (40), West Thurrock (20) and Walthamstow Marsh (15).
- H Rye Meads S.F. (69).
- M Bedfont Quarry (10). Hampstead Heath, one pair bred for the first time since 1967. Inner London: Regent's Park, one trapped and ringed on Aug. 17th.
- B Wraysbury G.P. (40).
- K Littlebrook (12).
- S Barn Elms Res., three pairs bred. Lonsdale Road Res., two pairs in the breeding season.

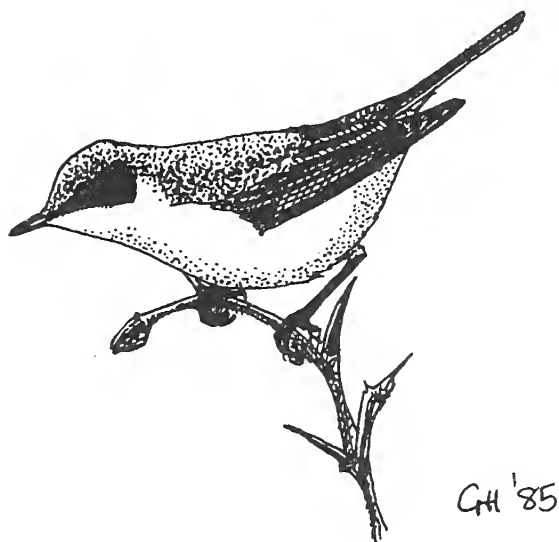
Icterine/Melodious Warbler

- M Queen Mary Res., one along the causeway on Sept. 18th (RJS). Only the second occurrence of an unidentified *Hippolais* sp. in London; mid-August to mid-September is the peak period for Icterine and Melodious along British coasts.

389 Dartford Warbler

- M Bushy Park, one in bracken on Nov. 17th and 18th (FGB,HC,LMY,BP); although not seen again in 1984 this bird was relocated in January 1985.

The first since 1978 and only the sixth since 1939 (when they last bred in London). The spread of this species to the Surrey heaths undoubtedly accounts for recent records; all have been in autumn.

397 Lesser Whitethroat

The number of known cases of breeding was about the same as in 1983, but the known or probable territories increased to 127 which is still probably a considerable underestimate. The distribution was 38 in Essex, ten in Herts., 21 in Middx., one in Bucks., 12 in Kent and 45 in Surrey. HRG at Queen Mary G.P. reported that the number of migrants there continues to increase, 142 having been ringed. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, one sang from June 4th to July 11th; singles trapped and ringed on Aug. 24th and Sept. 17th.
S Inner London: Battersea Park, one singing on Apr. 28th.

398 Whitethroat

The number of territories reported was approximately 191 compared with 180 in 1983, the main difference being a substantial decrease in Essex and an increase in Herts. and Surrey. The distribution was 38 in Essex, 39 in Herts., 18 in Middx., six in Bucks., 25 in Kent and 65 in Surrey. A poor autumn passage was reported by HRG at Queen Mary G.P. The only Inner London record is given.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, one trapped and ringed on Aug. 24th.

399 Garden Warbler

A further increase in the number of probable territories reported to 142 compared with 117 in 1983. The distribution was 38 in Essex, 45 in Herts., four in Middx., two in Bucks., 17 in Kent and 38 in Surrey. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, singles trapped and ringed on Aug. 15th, 16th, 22nd, 23rd and 24th, Sept. 7th and 24th and Oct. 11th; two trapped and ringed on Aug. 17th.

400 Blackcap

The largest local populations reported in the breeding season were 30 pairs at Hainault, 20 pairs at Havering, 25 singing males in June at Hampstead Heath and 58 pairs at Wimbledon Common. A summary of winter records and all Inner London records are given.

		<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>Total</i>
January and February:	individuals	2	3	3	6	6	20
	localities	2	3	2	6	5	18
November and December:	individuals	0	2	3	3	6	14
	localities	0	2	3	3	5	13

- M** Inner London: Regent's Park, one singing near the lake throughout the summer; more abundant than usual on passage, 27 were trapped and ringed between Sept. 3rd and Oct. 17th.

408 Wood Warbler

Three pairs bred at two localities, and some 21 other singing males were present at the end of May or in early June. All records are given.

- E** Epping Forest, two singing males in June. Hainault Forest, a male singing for a week only from May 5th. Harlow, one on Apr. 29th. Ilford, one on Sept. 5th and 6th. Valentine's Park, one singing on May 4th.
- H** Cuffley, two singing on May 30th. Northaw Great Wood, up to four singing during May. Rye Meads S.F., a male on Apr. 20th. Well Wood, four males on May 24th and two on June 6th. Whippendell Wood, a male on May 5th.
- M** Alexandra Park, one on July 23rd. Bushy Park, one singing on May 13th. Hampstead Heath, one singing from May 19th to June 10th. Scratchwood, one singing on May 13th and 14th. Stanmore Common, one on May 24th. Trent Park, one singing on May 13th, two on May 28th.
- K** Pett's Wood, one on May 7th and a few singing males throughout June.
- S** Addington Hills, two singing on June 17th and 18th. Banstead Wood, one on May 25th. Bookham Common, one singing on several dates from Apr. 23rd to May 7th, and one at a different locality on June 2nd and 3rd. Fairmile Common, two nests found, both with young on June 8th. Littleworth Common, a nest with eggs on June 1st. Headley Heath, one singing on May 7th, three on May 28th and two on Aug. 27th. Holmethorpe S.P., one on Aug. 12th. Kingswood, one singing on May 5th, June 5th and June 20th. Richmond Park, one on Apr. 20th. Sheen Common, one singing from June 3rd to 5th. Wimbledon Common, one singing on May 2nd and 4th.

1982 Additional Record

- E** Walthamstow Res., one singing on Apr. 14th (MJE). This affects the Table in *LBR* 47:8.

409 Chiffchaff

A summary of winter records and all Inner London records are given. The total of 78 for the November and December period includes the peak counts of 11 at Rye Meads S.F. on Dec. 15th and at least 13 at Wraysbury and Horton G.P.s on Dec. 28th. The latter count included two birds of eastern races, one showing the characters of *P.c. tristis*.

		<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>Total</i>
January and February:	individuals	3	7	5	3	3	3	24
	localities	3	6	4	1	2	3	19
November and December:	individuals	3	18	16	7	11	11	78
	localities	2	6	7	3	7	6	30

M Inner London: Green Park, one on Apr. 17th. Regent's Park, first on Apr. 10th; one singing from July 6th to 11th; one from Nov. 26th to Dec. 7th. St. James's Park, one on Apr. 16th; five on Sept. 27th. New River Walk, N1, one on Sept. 26th. Richmond Crescent, N1, one in mid-December.

410 Willow Warbler

The breeding population of Wimbledon Common was estimated at 104 pairs compared with 111 in 1983 and 119 in 1982. At Park Downs there were 16 pairs compared with 21 in 1983. But in the Headley, Walton, Tadworth, Banstead area there was said to be a 20% increase. Inner London records are given

M Inner London: Hyde Park, ten on Sept. 1st and 2nd. Regent's Park, one on Apr. 13th was the first, up to three were singing in the second half of April, but none stayed. St. James's Park, noted on passage in April, July and August.

411 Goldcrest

The inadequate information received on the breeding season is given and all Inner London records.

E Bred at Hainault (five pairs) and Valentine's Park, Ilford (one pair). Pairs present at Havering (four), Thorndon Park (six) and Wanstead Park (two).

H Evidence of breeding, one pair in each case, from Broxbourne Woods, Cheshunt G.P., Darlands Lake, Rickmansworth and Watford.

M Four pairs at Osterley Park where there were ten pairs in 1983. Inner London: Hyde Park, one on Feb. 12th. Kensington Gardens, one on Mar. 26th. St. James's Park, singles on Feb. 24th, Mar. 8th and Nov. 2nd, and two on Nov. 6th. Aberdare Gardens, NW6, two on Jan. 24th. Brompton Cemetery, three on Feb. 9th. New River Walk, N1, one on Feb. 1st and two on Oct. 18th.

K Pairs bred at Beckenham, Bromley Common and Orpington (two). Other pairs present or birds singing at Eltham (two), Joyden's Wood (two), Lullingstone and Ruxley G.P. (two).

S Evidence of breeding from Barn Elms Park and Res., Addlestone, Kew Gardens, West End Common, and Wimbledon Common (six pairs). Pairs or birds singing were also present at Bookham Common (four territories), and Kenley.

412 Firecrest

Nearly as widespread as in 1983; interestingly there were no records between mid-June and the end of October. All records are given.

E Epping Forest, one on several dates from Jan. 24th to Feb. 4th (EFCC) and in a different locality one singing on May 17th and 19th (CF). Hainault Forest, two males singing on Mar. 14th and 15th (NJI) and one singing for two weeks from June 2nd (MKD). Havering, one singing on June 10th (MKD).

H Park Street, one on Feb. 23rd (TRS). Stocker's Lake, one singing on Apr. 18th (TRD,RRD,AVM).

- M Hampstead Heath, one singing on June 3rd (MN,KES). Queen Mary G.P., a female trapped and ringed on Nov. 3rd (HRG). Staines Moor, one on Dec. 14th (CWW). Inner London: Regent's Park, a pair on Mar. 31st and Apr. 1st (TRDt).
- M/B Yiewsley G.P., one on Dec. 3rd (TJD,CL), three on Dec. 9th (CL), one on Dec. 24th (RBH) and one on Dec. 30th (AVM,PN).
- K Chislehurst, a male on Apr. 9th (RSW). Ruxley G.P., one from late January to Feb. 13th (JP,RTk *et al.*).
- S Addington Hills, a male at Heathfield from Apr. 15th to 21st, and a different male at Royal Russell School on Apr. 21st (JGt); males ringed at Royal Russell School on Oct. 28th and Dec. 2nd (JGt). Bank's Common, one calling on May 7th (DAB). Beddington S.F., a male singing on Apr. 11th (DHH,KDGM). Ham Lands, one on Nov. 27th, Dec. 28th and 30th (RJH).

413 Spotted Flycatcher

Although there were said to be none at usual breeding sites at Mitcham Common and Streatham Common, elsewhere pairs appeared to be breeding at most regular sites. At Hainault there were 12 pairs compared with 14 in 1983 and at Osterley Park 15 pairs (11 nests found) compared with 14 in 1983. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Hyde Park, two on Sept. 1st. Kensington Gardens, one on Aug. 7th and two on Sept. 2nd. Regent's Park, one on Aug. 10th, two on Sept. 8th and one on Sept. 11th. St. James's Park, one on June 14th. Bunhill Fields, EC2, four on Aug. 22nd. Grays Inn Fields, four on Aug. 23rd. New River Walk, N1, one on Aug. 6th. Scandrett Street, Wapping, E1, a juvenile being fed by an adult on July 17th.

416 Pied Flycatcher

Spring passage from Apr. 15th to May 22nd with half the records in the first six days and involving at least 16 individuals. Commoner on the autumn passage from Aug. 10th to Sept. 30th with half the records in the four days from Aug. 13th to 16th. Probably about 47 individuals involved. The best year since 1976. All records are given.

- E Dagnam Park, two on Aug. 14th (AJG). Fairlop, singles on Aug. 14th, Aug. 25th and Sept. 26th (AB,CGN). Havering, two on Aug. 21st (MKD). Ilford, at Valentine's Park, singles on Aug. 14th, 15th, 19th, 20th, 24th and 25th, Sept. 9th and 30th but two on Sept. 2nd. (CGN). Little Parndon, one on Aug. 16th (AHS). Wanstead, a male on Apr. 23rd (FRT). Wanstead Park, one on Sept. 23rd (MDD).
- H Bowyers G.P., four from Aug. 13th to 16th (MJH,MJO). Cheshunt G.P., a female on May 20th (TG); two on Aug. 14th (GJW). Panshanger, a female on Apr. 29th (FB). Rye Meads S.F., one on Aug. 25th (RMRG). Watford, three on Sept. 1st (*per* SCMR).
- M Bentley Priory, one on Aug. 15th (SHC,GW). Brent Res., one on Aug. 16th (RB). Hampstead Heath, a male on Apr. 17th and 19th and May 2nd (TN,MN,KES); singles on Aug. 10th, 13th and 18th (MN,KES). Kenton, one on Aug. 15th and 16th (PAW). Osterley Park, one on Aug. 14th and two on Aug. 15th (DGH). Queen Mary Res., one on Aug. 15th (JAS). Ruislip Local N.R., a male on Apr. 20th (RDNHS). Inner London: Regent's Park, singles trapped and ringed on Aug. 16th and 22nd (JPW,TRDt).
- K Beckenham Place Park, three on Aug. 14th (DD). Bromley, one on

Aug. 24th at Jubilee Park (GDN). Chelsfield, one on Aug. 14th (BRG). Foots Cray, a male on Apr. 16th (CEG). Foots Cray Meadows, a male on Apr. 15th and 16th (SJG, JW). Hither Green Cemetery, one on Aug. 16th (DD). Orpington, one on Aug. 19th (BRG).

- S Bletchingley, a male on Apr. 15th and 16th (*per* PEJ). Hogsmill S.F., a male on Aug. 16th (SDBWS). Kew Gardens, a female on Apr. 16th and 17th (RBH *et al.*). Tadworth, one on May 22nd (CKD, POD). Walton Heath, one on May 19th (CKD, POD). Wimbledon Common, a male on May 5th (RHK). Inner London: Lambeth Palace Gardens, a female on May 18th (PJS).

1983 Additional Records

- K Greenwich Park, one on Sept. 6th and 13th (ASW).

417 Bearded Tit

The flock of 40 at Rainham Marsh is the largest party seen in the Area since 1978. All records are given.

- E Rainham Marsh, five to ten on Nov. 3rd, 17 on Nov. 10th, 25 on Nov. 11th, 40 on Nov. 18th and Dec. 1st, then ten on Dec. 8th, 12 on the 15th, ten on the 26th and two on the 29th (MKD, RBH). Walthamstow Marsh, a female on Feb. 2nd and Mar. 23rd (TG). West Thurrock, two on Jan. 6th and Feb. 20th (NJI).
- H Stanstead Abbots G.P./Rye Meads S.F. area, four in January, two in February, two on Mar. 11th and one on Mar. 17th (LVPG, RMRG).
- K Thamesmead, a few in a reed-bed in January and February (PEH).

418 Long-tailed Tit

Almost certainly increasing. No observers suggested a decline in numbers. At Wimbledon Common 27 pairs bred compared with 23 in 1983. At Bookham Common, the increase was even more marked with 13 territories in 136 acres compared with five in 1983. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: the only evidence of possible breeding was a party of 15 in Kensington Gardens on June 27th. St. James's Park, one or two, and once four, from January to May; and August and November. Hyde Park, four on Feb. 4th. Brompton Cemetery, two on Feb. 9th, six on Dec. 18th. New River Walk, N1, two on Jan. 10th, Feb. 23rd and Mar. 1st; four on Oct. 20th and Nov. 26th and two on Dec. 26th. St. John's Wood, six on Feb. 16th. Thurloe Square, seven or eight on Nov. 26th.

419 Marsh Tit

No information was received suggesting a change of status. For the fourth year in succession the number of pairs at Hainault Forest was 12, and the number of pairs at Havering was two as in 1983. There were no Inner London records.

420 Willow Tit

Breeding season distribution and Inner London records are given.

- E Dagnam Park, one pair bred. Hainault Forest, five pairs. Havering, two pairs.
- H Cheshunt G.P., one pair bred. Darland's Lake, one on June 16th. Haberdashers School, one pair bred. Old Parkbury G.P., a family group on June 27th. Rye Meads S.F., two pairs bred. Stocker's Lake, one or two during the summer.

- M Harefield Place G.P., one on May 3rd. Mill Hill, one on Apr. 17th and 30th. Stanmore Country Park, one on May 24th. Inner London: Regent's Park, a juvenile trapped and ringed on July 18th had been heard calling almost daily from early in the month.
- K Pett's Wood, a pair present in May and June. West Wickham, a pair in Well Wood in May and June.
- S Ashtead Common, one on Apr. 27th and May 11th. Bookham Common, at least one territory. Burgh Heath, a pair in April. Prince's Coverts, two pairs on Apr. 8th; a nest with nine eggs on May 16th; a pair in Sixty Acre Wood on June 9th. Tadworth Common, one pair, and nest with eight eggs on Apr. 29th. Godstone N.R., two on Apr. 13th and 18th.

422 Coal Tit

Even less information than usual was received. The breeding population of Wimbledon Common was estimated at 40 pairs compared with 36 in 1983. However in the Tadworth area a 40% decrease was reported. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Brompton Cemetery, two on Feb. 9th and Dec. 18th. Kensington Gardens, a pair with fledglings on June 11th. St. James's Park, bred, at least one brood.

423 Blue Tit

An unsatisfactory breeding season in some localities. At Osterley Park DGH, with 13 territories on the census plot, reports a poor breeding season with small clutches and low fledging success. At Nower Wood, Headley, RRG reported the growth rates of the nestlings to be considerably retarded, probably due to the cool weather and continuous heavy rain in late May. Some birds taking in excess of two weeks to reach the correct size for ringing, a process which normally takes six or seven days. In the Tadworth area a 30% decrease was reported. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, numerous family parties in May and June. St. James's Park, bred, at least two broods. Finsbury Circus, present Dec. 14th to 17th. Lincolns Inn Fields, WC2, one singing on Apr. 26th. Lonsdale Square, N1, several resident. New River Walk, N1, two pairs bred. Scandrett Street, Wapping, E1, present in July, but no proof of breeding.
- S Inner London: Lambeth Palace Gardens, one singing on May 18th. St. Thomas's Hospital, two singing on May 17th, also noted January to April and Sept. 13th.

424 Great Tit.

At Osterley Park, where there were ten territories, DGH reported a poor breeding season. The comments made by RRG concerning the breeding of Blue Tits at Nower Wood, Headley (above) apply also to this species. A 15% decrease was reported in the Tadworth area. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, numerous family parties in May and June. St. James's Park, bred, at least one brood. Lonsdale Square, N1, one or two resident. New River Walk, N1, seven on Oct. 8th, four on Nov. 26th. Red Lion Square, two on Sept. 27th. Scandrett Street, Wapping, E1, present, but no proof of breeding.

425 Nuthatch

The only comments on status received were a 15% increase in the Tadworth area and no change of status at Epping and Thorndon Park. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Kensington Gardens, two pairs; one pair nested in a lime tree and was seen feeding young on June 5th; the other pair was seen working on a hole in an oak tree, but apparently did not breed. Regent's Park, single birds heard intermittently in late winter.

427 Treecreeper

The largest number of pairs reported breeding was 12 at Hainault, the same number as in 1983. There were ten pairs at Wimbledon Common. In the Tadworth area a 20% increase was reported. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Kensington Gardens, a pair on Feb. 1st and Mar. 22nd, three together on June 5th and an adult feeding a young bird near the bandstand on June 9th. St. James's Park, one on Jan. 4th and 6th.

430 Golden Oriole

- E Thorndon Park, a female on June 20th (AWW).
 H Hilfield Park Res., a male on May 2nd (CIB).
 M Bushy Park, a male and a female on May 13th (JO); the male was relocated on May 20th (RBH), 21st and 23rd (GMH, RBH, AVM, PAW); the female was also seen again, with the male, on May 22nd (JH).
 S Wimbledon Common, a male singing on May 4th (RES).

Nowadays an annual migrant in London, although this is the first time a pair has been seen together since 1953. A pair bred successfully in 1930.

432 Red-backed Shrike

- E Waltham Abbey, a female on Sept. 16th (RGN).
 H Cheshunt G.P., one on Sept. 15th (ADW).

These two records are presumably of the same bird; sadly this species is no longer of annual occurrence in our Area.

434 Great Grey Shrike

- E Waltham Abbey, the bird referred to under Cheshunt G.P. (below) divided its time with visits to Waltham Abbey, Hooks Marsh and Fishers Green (GJW *et al.*).
- H Cheshunt G.P., one from Jan. 1st to Mar. 31st and again from Nov. 3rd until Dec. 31st (LVPG). King George's Fields, Barnet, one from Dec. 3rd until the end of the year (AHS,CH).
- K Chislehurst, one on Feb. 24th (DBU).

436 Jay

No movements were reported and the largest concentration was 28 at Brent Res. on Dec. 28th. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, seen throughout the year. Kensington Gardens, one on Mar. 4th. St. James's Park, singles on Apr. 13th and 27th, June 6th, Sept. 27th and Oct. 9th. Aberdare Gardens, NW6, one to four seen throughout the year. Lonsdale Square and Offord Road, N1, three or four sightings in November and December. Queens Gate Gardens, SW7, two on Oct. 17th.

437 Magpie

The largest concentration was 60 of which 41 were together at Stanstead Abbots G.P. on Jan. 8th. There were also roosts of up to 50 at Thamesmead from January to March and at Mitcham Common in January and February. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Hyde Park, five together near a nest on July 16th. Regent's Park, at least three pairs bred. St. James's Park, at least five pairs. Brunswick Square, a pair nested in the top of a plane tree in Coram Fields. New River Walk, N1, resident but no evidence of breeding. Widespread records of one or two outside the breeding season.

440 Jackdaw

The maximum at Wraysbury G.P. rubbish tip again reached 2,000, on Feb. 27th. Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Mar. 23rd, one with Carrion Crows from Apr. 12th to 28th; 25 on Oct. 21st.

441 Rook

Breeding records are given. No information received for Essex or Herts. There were no Inner London records.

- B Denham, six nests in a new rookery at Ivy House Farm. Wraysbury G.P., 23 nests.
- K Downe, 15 occupied nests.
- S Gatton, Redhill, 70 occupied nests. Godstone, 12 occupied nests. Tandridge, 30 nests. Walton Downs, 18 occupied nests.

442a Carrion Crow

DGH carried out a survey of 20 km squares in TQ 17 (west London) and found 17 occupied nests and 11 other pairs whose nests were not

located, giving an average of 1.4 pairs per square km. Inner London breeding records are given.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, many pairs bred; flocks of up to 70 in late summer. St. James's Park, at least two pairs nest building in April. Kensington Gardens, a pair feeding on a freshly killed grey squirrel on June 3rd. Bessborough Gardens, SW1, one at nest on May 15th. Russell Square, WC1, one carrying material to nest on Apr. 19th. Swiss Cottage, NW3/NW6, three nests under construction in this area on Apr. 13th.
- S Inner London: Elephant & Castle, one on nest at St. Mary's churchyard on Apr. 10th.

442b Hooded Crow

- H Barnet, one from January to Apr. 7th (RBE,SPN).

443 Raven

- K Orpington, one with a well-worn metal ring on its left leg from Mar. 17th to 21st (RD,NE).
- S Inner London: Bermondsey, one flying over mobbed by Black-headed Gulls on Oct. 28th (JGC).

The usual doubts as to the origin of these birds apply.

444 Starling

At Woodmansterne, 2,700 flew W from 07.37 to 08.15 hrs. on Oct. 24th, and 730 WSW from 07.31 to 07.57 hrs. on Oct. 30th. The largest number reported roosting was 16,000 at Dartford Marsh on Dec. 23rd. In Inner London breeding was reported at St. James's Park and Lambeth Palace Gardens.

446 House Sparrow

The largest numbers reported were 2,000 at Sewardstone on Sept. 7th and the same number at Little Parndon on Nov. 29th.

448 Tree Sparrow

Reported to be commoner, than in 1983, in Richmond Park. The largest number breeding at any locality was ten pairs at Rye Meads S.F. In the period from January to March there were flocks of 150 at two localities and of 100 at four others. Largest numbers were present at Beddington S.F. with a maximum of 250 on Jan. 13th and again on Feb. 10th. After the breeding season there were flocks of 100 at two localities in August and September and 200 at Beddington S.F. on Sept. 23rd. Thereafter maxima were in the region of 50. In Inner London a family party with newly fledged young was seen in Surrey Docks on July 7th, and there were five there on Sept. 23rd. These were the only Inner London records.

451 Chaffinch

In the period from the beginning of the year up to April flocks of 100 to 300 were noted at eight localities and in the marshes in the Thamesmead area in February numbers reached c. 1,000. From Aug. 27th up to the end of the year flocks of 100 to 300 were seen at six localities. Autumn passage was noted on several dates in October from the 7th onwards, especially on the 11th and 12th with observations at six localities totalling 233 birds. Information is lacking on breeding success in Inner London.

452 Brambling

Recorded at 56 localities at the beginning of the year, the last, a pair, were at Hilfield Park Res. on May 5th. Numbers at any locality did not exceed 43 except at the Plumstead and Thamesmead marshes where there was a maximum of 100 in early March, and at Beddington S.F. where there were 100 on Feb. 11th and Apr. 1st and 150 in four flocks on Apr. 10th. The first autumn arrival was very early, on Sept. 16th, but they were very scarce, being reported from only nine localities, all of which, together with Inner London records, are given.

- H Rye Meads S.F., one on Oct. 14th.
- M Queen Mary G.P., one on Oct. 6th. Staines Moor, one on Nov. 11th. St. Mary's Church, Staines, one on Dec. 6th. Inner London: St. James's Park, a female on Apr. 15th and one on Apr. 18th.
- K High Elms, three on Dec. 3rd, 20 on Dec. 27th. Sevenoaks G.P., one on Sept. 16th.
- S Beddington S.F., two on Nov. 5th. Riddlesdown, a male on Nov. 2nd. Tadworth, four on Dec. 12th.

455 Greenfinch

Less information was received than in recent years. In the period from January to March numbers reached 100 at three localities and from Aug. 24th to the end of the year 100 to 200 were reported from four localities. Of the two localities producing the largest numbers in 1983, the conditions at Staines Res. were not repeated and unfortunately no information has been received for Essex. However there does appear to have been a reduction in numbers and this is borne out by a report of a 60% decrease in the Tadworth area. Inner London breeding season records are given.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, eight or nine singing males. St. James's Park, two or three pairs in the spring. No information received for the other parks. Lincoln's Inn Fields, two singing males in April, almost certainly nesting.

456 Goldfinch

The largest concentrations were present in January, 100 to 120 at three localities; with the onset of passage at the end of March and to mid-April, 100 to 150 at two localities, and after the breeding season from the end of August to mid-November, 100 to 200 in six localities. Breeding season records for Inner London are given.

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, several family parties; up to 30 in July and August and 17 trapped and ringed between July 9th and Aug. 22nd. St. James's Park, a family party of two adults and two begging juveniles on Aug. 24th, but probably did not nest in the park. No information received for the other parks. Victoria Embankment Gardens, one on May 15th. Scandrett Street, Wapping, E1, one singing on Apr. 19th. Thurtle Road, E2, one on June 26th.
- S Inner London: Surrey Docks, present in the breeding season but probably did not actually breed in the docks. St. Thomas's Hospital, one singing and one on a nest in a false acacia on Apr. 30th; sitting bird noted until May 21st but no young seen. Lambeth Palace Gardens, one singing on May 17th and 18th. The Cut, SE1, one on May 11th. Westminster Bridge Road, two, one singing, on June 14th.

457 Siskin

Common and widespread at the beginning of the year being reported from 90 localities. Numbers appear to have been high for the first ten days of January, to have fallen off in mid-month then increased again about the 22nd, remaining high until about Feb. 12th. The largest flock was 400 on Feb. 4th. The last recorded was a male at Croxley Green on May 7th; at this locality 150 were ringed during the year. The first arrival in the autumn was one at Eltham on Aug. 27th, but numbers were much lower, the maximum being 50 at Cheshunt G.P. on Dec. 17th and there were reports from only 25 localities. Parties of 100 or more and Inner London records are given.

- E Waltham Abbey, 300 in January.
 H Cheshunt G.P., 100 on Jan. 31st and Feb. 10th. Panshanger, 400 on Feb. 4th.
 M Uxbridge, 100 on Jan. 7th, 8th and 29th. Inner London: Regent's Park, up to 25 during the period Feb. 9th to Apr. 21st, 24 trapped and ringed from Feb. 14th to 24th; a flock of 30 flying SW low over the park on Sept. 25th. New River Walk, N1, two on Feb. 23rd. Grays Inn, WC1, a flock of 25 to 30 feeding on plane tree seeds on Mar. 6th and 7th. Tottenham Court Road, W1, 47 on Mar. 19th and 25 on Mar. 20th, more males than females.
 B Wraysbury G.P., 180 on Jan. 22nd.

458 Linnet

Counts of 100 or more were received from 24 localities. An attempt is made below to tabulate these on a monthly basis, using the largest count for each locality for each month. The resulting figures, although obviously not absolutes, do seem to indicate the trends in sequence: normal wintering population; gradual dispersal; spring passage; build-up after the breeding season; autumn passage; reduction towards normal wintering population.

January	740	August	500
February	620	September	1,400
March	400	October	1,700
April	1,200	November	1,200
		December	1,030

Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: St. Pancras Way, NW1, 40 on a derelict site on Jan. 25th. Wapping, two on Apr. 9th, one on Apr. 19th.
 S Inner London: Bankside, SE1, one singing on Apr. 17th. Surrey Docks, present in the breeding season but probably did not actually breed in the docks.

459 Twite

- E Berwick Ponds, one on Dec. 9th. Rainham Marsh, noted on six dates from Jan. 6th to Mar. 24th, maximum 15 on Mar. 17th; three on Nov. 3rd, seven on Nov. 11th and six on Dec. 15th (MKD). West Thurrock, ten on Feb. 19th (MS).
 B Wraysbury G.P., three on Feb. 23rd (TJD).

460 Redpoll

Breeding season distribution, flocks of 100 or more and an Inner London record are given.

- E Pairs at Dagnam Park (1), Epping Forest (12), Hainault (12-15), Havering (4-5), North Weald (5), Romford (1), Stifford (1) and Warley (3). Epping Forest, 300 on Apr. 20th was the maximum.

Hainault Forest, 150 in October. Thorndon Park, 100 on Mar. 31st. Waltham Abbey, 200 in December.

- H Broxbourne Woods, seven on June 2nd, four on June 11th. Mymmshall Wood, two on June 24th.
- M Alexandra Park, two territories, probably bred. East Finchley Cemetery, one on May 16th, July 4th and 9th. Hampstead Heath, two pairs bred and other birds present; 100 to 150 on Mar. 25th. Mill Hill, a male singing at Frith Manor Farm on May 23rd. Ruislip Local N.R., a pair on May 29th. Inner London: Hyde Park, one on Jan. 15th.
- K Crofton Heath, 150 on Dec. 5th. Hither Green Cemetery, present all summer, probably bred. Ruxley and Foots Cray Woods, present all year. Sevenoaks G.P., 150 throughout December. The Tarn, Eltham, possibly bred.
- S Coulsdon, both males and females seen regularly at Dunsfold Rise at the end of May and early June, but no proof of breeding. Headley Heath, 75 to 100 in one flock on Apr. 5th. Wimbledon Common, 100 on Mar. 18th and Apr. 4th; eight pairs probably bred.

463 Crossbill

- E Thorndon Park, a male and a female on Mar. 11th (RL).
- B Black Park, 12 on Mar. 15th included males and females with nest material (GCDJ).
- S Bookham Common, on May 7th 14 or 15 flew E in a flock at 07.25 hrs. (DAB).

There has been no concrete proof of breeding in the London Area since 1968, so the Bucks. sighting is of interest.

469 Bullfinch

Inner London records are given.

- M Inner London: Hyde Park, a pair on Jan. 26th and Apr. 12th. Brompton Cemetery, a male and a female on Feb. 9th.

470 Hawfinch

All records are given, but summarised for the principal localities.

- E Dagnam Park, one pair bred (AJG). Epping Forest, eight in February, four on Mar. 11th and one on May 5th (PDD,CF,RL). Galley Hill Wood, 12 on May 5th (RL). Hainault Forest, four pairs in April (CGN). Harold Hill, 20 on Jan. 2nd, 25 on Jan. 11th, three on Feb. 14th, five on Apr. 3rd; one on Oct. 29th and Nov. 14th, ten on Dec. 9th and 29th (*per* JMH). Sewardstone, five on Apr. 7th (CF). Thorndon Park, two on Mar. 11th and Apr. 14th (RL). Woodford Green, three on Mar. 4th (KM). Woodford, one on Dec. 26th (CJMG).
- H Amwell G.P., one or two on six dates from Feb. 18th to May 5th (LVPG). Broxbourne Woods, three on Apr. 11th and a pair on June 4th (CCL,GJW). Brickendon, a pair on June 4th (GJW). Bencroft Wood, two pairs bred (KS). Hazel Grove, up to 11 from Jan. 24th to Apr. 1st, a pair on May 1st and 9th, breeding possible (HPEG). Maple Cross S.F., one on June 24th (MCRG). Northaw Great Wood, one on May 18th and June 17th (HPEG,RAH). Panshanger, two on May 28th (CCL). Whippendell Wood, one or two on five dates from Mar. 27th to May 5th, on the latter with nest material; six on May 7th (TRD *et al.*). Wormley Wood, a male on Apr. 4th (KS).
- M Bentley Priory, singles on five dates from Jan. 20th to Apr. 13th, a

pair on Apr. 21st and 29th, two males and a female on May 6th; one on Dec. 9th (SHC,GW *et al.*). Ruislip Local N.R., one on May 29th (JE).

B Denham, one on June 7th (DR).

K Hartley, 15 on Dec. 16th (BWT). High Elms, one on Mar. 11th, two pairs on Apr. 2nd, three on Dec. 2nd (RTK). Hoblingwell Wood, one on Apr. 25th (KHP). Lullingstone, four on Apr. 21st, one on May 22nd (SJG,KHP). Pratt's Bottom, one on Mar. 31st (TRS).

S Bookham Common, three on Apr. 1st, four on Apr. 8th, two on Apr. 13th; one flying over on Sept. 23rd (DAB). Caterham, a male at roost on Dec. 30th (RBH).

1981 Additional Record

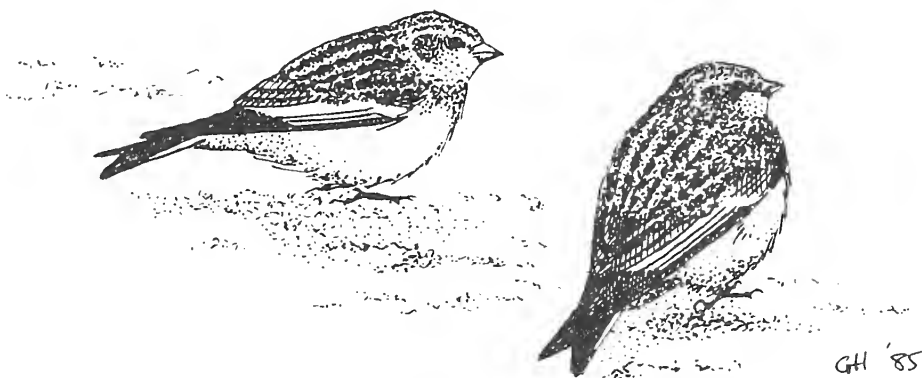
M Bentley Priory, one on Nov. 3rd (GMH).

493 Lapland Bunting

E Fairlop, one on Nov. 3rd (CGN).

The 13th record for the London Area, and the seventh during the last five years.

494 Snow Bunting



E King George V Res., three on Nov. 10th, two on Nov. 11th and one on Nov. 12th (PF,PJV *et al.*).

M Staines Res., a female from Dec. 1st to the end of the year, two females together on Dec. 7th (GMH,PN *et al.*).

K Stone Marsh, four on Dec. 8th (BWT) and then a male and two females from Dec. 16th to the end of the year (AJM,RM).

By recent standards a good year; the largest flock ever seen in London was c.40 at Swanscombe Marsh on Dec. 2nd 1962.

496 Yellowhammer

Concentrations of 100 or more are given. There were no Inner London records.

E Little Parndon, 130 on Mar. 27th. Rainham Marsh, 100 on Feb. 11th. Sewardstone, 100 on Feb. 12th and Nov. 10th

H Rye Meads S.F., 150 on Jan. 29th and 100 on Mar. 17th.

506 Reed Bunting

Numbers of 50 or more were seen only at Rainham Marsh in the period from October to December, maximum 150 on Dec. 15th; Maple Cross S.F., 50 on Feb. 24th and Elmers End S.F., 80 on Dec. 28th. At Carshalton 24 were trapped and ringed in gardens on the St. Helier housing estate in February. In Inner London there were two pairs at Surrey Docks in the breeding season, one pair bred successfully.

510 Corn Bunting

The largest number at a roost was 197 at Maple Cross on Apr. 8th. The next highest count was of 80 at Rye Meads S.F. on Apr. 15th. The breeding season distribution is given. More records would be welcome.

- E Berwick Ponds/Corbets Tey, 20 pairs. Hainault, ten pairs. Rainham Marsh, five pairs.
- H Bred at Mill End, and singing males present at Broad Colney pastures, Croxley Green, Cooper's Green, Langleybury, London Colney, and three localities near Rickmansworth.
- M Osterley Park, one singing in May and June.
- S Beddington S.F., one singing on June 19th.

Appendix I

The following records relate to birds of captive origin.

48 Whooper Swan

B River Misbourne at Higher Denham, two on July 21st, 23rd and Aug. 8th (JE,RBH,PN).

Not normally a species that appears under 'escapes', however the time of year, allied with the tameness of this pair, leave little doubt as to their origins.

49 Bean Goose

H Maple Cross S.F., two on Feb. 24th (MCRG). Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 28th (RMRG).

50 Pink-footed Goose

M Broadwater G.P., one on May 17th (TRD).

S River Thames at Kingston, one on Jan. 28th (SDBWS).

54 Snow Goose

H Cheshunt G.P., singles from Feb. 11th to 12th and on Sept. 16th (SC). Hilfield Park Res., two on Feb. 11th (TRD).

M Brent Res., a blue-phase bird on May 25th (LAB).

K Sevenoaks G.P., one on many dates between June 17th and the end of the year (RHT,JT).

S Gatton Park, two blue-phase birds on three dates in February, on Apr. 14th and on two dates in November (FMK). Bay Pond, Godstone, a blue-phase bird on Feb. 23rd (PEJ).

56 Barnacle Goose

H Hilfield Park Res., one on May 5th and 14th (MJE,SHM). Rye Meads S.F., one on Apr. 28th (RMRG). Stocker's Lake, singles on Aug. 30th and from Sept. 5th to 17th (TRD,CL,AVM).

M Brent Res., one on Sept. 3rd and from Oct. 28th to Nov. 4th (RB,LAB). Broadwater G.P., one on Aug. 15th and 26th (JE,RDNHS). Osterley Park, one on June 5th (DGH).

K Sevenoaks G.P., one on Mar. 19th and from Apr. 12th to 27th and two on June 21st (RHT,JT).

S Barn Elms Res., one on Dec. 9th and 10th (RBH,RJS). Buckland S.P., one on Aug. 18th (ID). Gatton Park, five on three dates in February, also on Apr. 14th and Nov. 11th and lastly six on Nov. 27th (FMK). Holmethorpe S.P., one on Mar. 25th, Apr. 22nd and Sept. 2nd, seven on Oct. 14th and Nov. 11th (JDF).

57 Brent Goose

S Barn Elms Res., a first-summer bird on Aug. 14th, Sept. 25th and 26th was of the dark-bellied race *B.b. bernicla* (RBH,RJS,JPPW,CK). Kew Gardens, one on Sept. 6th and 10th was the Barn Elms bird (RBH). Richmond Park, one on Aug. 9th (EDr) was almost certainly the same bird seen at Barn Elms and Kew.

59 Egyptian Goose

E Fishers Green, one all year (JF).

M Brent Res., one on July 7th (LAB).

60 Ruddy Shelduck

E Barking, one on Jan. 28th (PCG *et. al.*). Walthamstow Res., one or two all year (JF *et al.*).

M Clissold Park, up to six free-flying birds throughout the year (TG). Staines Res., three on Aug. 26th (JE,AVM,PN). Wood Green Res., one on Sept. 18th (DPy).

K Sevenoaks G.P., two on July 20th (JT).

S Barn Elms Res., one on May 25th (JPPW). Barnes Common, a female on May 30th and June 4th (RBH). Kew Gardens, a female on Aug. 27th was still present in 1985 (RBH). All sightings almost certainly refer to the same individual.

62 Wood Duck

E Kelvedon Hatch, a drake on Apr. 5th (CW).

M Brent Res., a drake present all year (LAB).

281 Long-eared Owl

K High Elms, a bird was found during December, trapped by its jesses, it was freed and then subsequently released by the RSPCA (RTk).

Another species not normally featured in this section, one can only hope that its period of captivity did not hamper its existence as a 'wild bird'.

In addition to the above birds, the following escaped species were also noted in the London Area during 1984 (full details are retained on the Society's record cards).

Black Swan

Bar-headed Goose

South African Shelduck

Chiloe Wigeon

Cinnamon Teal

Bahama Pintail

Budgerigar

Cockatiel

Hill Mynah

Red-crested Cardinal

Breeding Tufted Ducks in the London Area

P. J. Oliver

INTRODUCTION

The Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* has increased dramatically in Western Europe since the late nineteenth century, the increase in England continued until the late 1930s, with subsequent increases attributed to new reservoirs and gravel pits (Cramp and Simmons 1977). The most recent review of breeding Tufted Ducks in the London Area is in Montier (1977) which refers to further increases in this region between 1954 and 1972. Since then, records of broods submitted to the LNHS have suggested a continued population growth. In order to assess the position a London Area breeding season survey was organised in 1984.

This survey was based upon counts of adults between May 19th and June 3rd, just before most nesting females are likely to commence incubation. Counts of nests are impracticable (and cause much disturbance and desertion) and counts of broods underestimate the breeding population because they reveal neither nest failures nor, unless counts are made on a daily basis, brood losses, which are often high. Observers were asked to visit all waters where breeding was known to have occurred in the previous ten years, if possible making three visits in the survey period and counting separately pairs, lone males and lone females. They were also asked to define the habitat as reservoir, gravel pit, park lake or other. The data thus collected have been supplemented by records submitted in the normal way to the recorders.

This paper first summarises the historical information for the London Area and then gives the results of the survey. The London Area population is then calculated and compared with published information available for other areas in southeast England and for the whole of Britain.

PAST RECORDS

The Tufted Duck seems to have appeared initially as a breeding species in southeast England (the home counties and Sussex), mainly as a result of introductions, as in St. James's Park in the nineteenth century (Homes 1964), at Edenbridge, Kent before 1909 (Ticehurst 1909) and in Surrey before 1925 (Walpole-Bond 1938), though Fitter (1949) stated that there was no evidence that the St. James's Park introductions were responsible for the modern breeding stock. Sage (1959) refers to regular breeding in Hertfordshire at Tring, outside our Area, from 1893, (though whether or not this was the result of introductions is not stated) but he mentions only occasional



breeding at Hertfordshire localities within our Area in the first half of this century. By the 1930s breeding was regular in Inner London and in several localities in the Essex, Kent and Surrey sectors but there were very few pairs in Middlesex (Homes 1964). Over 100 ducklings were counted at St. James's Park as early as 1929. At Regent's Park 49 ducklings were counted in 1933, but there was no breeding there between 1938 and 1954. Homes (1964) gave no estimate of the total breeding population in the 1950s but, on the basis of his account and including 15 pairs for St. James's Park (based on Gillham 1956), it seems probable that there was a maximum of about 100 pairs nesting in the London Area at that time. Homes (1964) estimated over 100 pairs present and probably breeding in the London Area in 1961.

Records submitted to the LNHS since 1950 are insufficient to assess the breeding season population each year and the data published in *LBR's*, based mainly upon brood counts, underestimate the total that actually nest. For some years hardly any records were published so even brood counts are clearly incomplete. In order to assess trends therefore, a comparison has been made simply of the largest number of broods recorded in a season in each five year period from 1950 to 1984. The figures are given in Table 1, together with the total number of sites from which broods were reported in at least one season in each period and the average number of broods per site derived from the foregoing data. The data suggest a rapid and consistent growth in the population from the 1950s to the 1970s, interrupted only by an apparent decline in the early 1970s. There is no evidence to suggest whether that decline was the result of poorer observer coverage, lower breeding success or a contraction in the breeding population. Although the brood counts in the 1980s do not indicate any further increase (only 186 broods were reported in 1984 compared with 218 between 1975-79 — see Table 1) the number of breeding sites has continued to grow, suggesting that the breeding population may still be expanding. The average number of broods per site also increased consistently in the 1950s and 1960s, but has declined since. This reflects the continued expansion into new sites where numbers are usually individually small, while the numbers at the longer established important sites have become more stable.

Table 1. Maximum number of Tufted Duck broods counted in one season and total number of sites from which broods recorded in the London Area in each five year period.

	<i>Broods</i>	<i>Sites</i>	<i>Average per site</i>
1950-54	21	16	1.3
1955-59	43	23	1.9
1960-64	91	35	2.6
1965-69	149	44	3.4
1970-74	104	34	3.0
1975-79	218	77	2.8
1980-84	222	94	2.4

RESULTS OF THE 1984 SURVEY

Coverage in 1984 was good, a total of 129 sites being visited. These included 32 sites additional to those from which broods had been reported in the previous ten years. On the other hand, 28 sites from which broods had been reported at least once in that period were not visited. These were all unimportant, however, none having held more than three broods in any of the three previous seasons. Of the 129 sites visited 100 held Tufted Ducks on at least one date in the survey period and of these, 96 certainly held pairs or subsequently had broods reported from them. Table 2 summarises the data by county sector from which it will be seen that there were a minimum of 713 pairs and a maximum of 957 pairs. There were also between 420 and 579

additional drakes and between 35 and 52 additional ducks. At Walthamstow Reservoirs, the observer counted between 50 and 60 additional females, but commented on the difficulty of distinguishing pairs when large numbers of ducks are resting on islands and banks in close proximity to one another. The evidence from all other waters covered in the survey suggests that the great majority of females pair and it has therefore been assumed that between 40 and 50 of the additional ducks counted at Walthamstow Reservoirs were actually paired. The above totals and the figures in the tables include this adjustment. Allowance can also be made for sites not covered in 1984 but from which broods were reported at least once in 1980-83. Taking the maximum number of broods recorded in any of those seasons from each site gives a total of 28 broods. If it is assumed that these waters were occupied in 1984 and that the number of pairs is at least two and a half times the number of broods (see Appendix), the minimum and maximum number of pairs shown in Table 2 would be increased to 783 and 1,027 respectively.

Table 2. Minimum and maximum number of pairs of Tufted Ducks and of additional drakes and ducks counted in the London Area between May 19th and June 3rd 1984 and adjusted as explained in the text.

	<i>Pairs</i>		<i>Additional Drakes</i>		<i>Additional Ducks</i>	
	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Essex	218	296	162	198	15	16
Herts.	159	239	50	90	1	5
Middx.	109	132	95	132	6	11
Inner London	126	133	63	70	7	7
Bucks.	6	7	2	4	—	—
Kent	31	51	12	24	4	6
Surrey	64	99	36	61	2	7
<i>Total</i>	713	957	420	579	35	52

The distribution of pairs was very similar to that reported by Montier (1977) being closely correlated with the river systems. The Lea and Colne valleys with their associated gravel pits are particularly important as is Central London, where there are important breeding concentrations in some of the parks, notably St. James's. The distribution of the minimum number of pairs according to type of site is given in Table 3. This confirms the attraction for this species of gravel pits and park lakes, over two-thirds of the minimum number of pairs occurring in these habitats. Reservoirs, while contributing fewer occupied sites, accounted for a proportionately higher percentage of the population. Apart from the commonly used types of site, records were received from a power station lagoon, two sewage farms (including at least 28 pairs at Rye Meads), two canals, a lake in a cemetery and a drainage ditch on a grazing marsh.

Table 3. Distribution by habitat of minimum number of pairs of Tufted Ducks counted in the London Area between May 19th and June 3rd 1984. Figures in brackets are the number of sites.

	<i>River</i>	<i>Flooded Gravel or Sand Pit</i>	<i>Park Lake</i>	<i>Reservoir</i>	<i>Other Waters</i>	<i>Total</i>
Essex	— (—)	108 (9)	15 (6)	94 (3)	1 (1)	218 (19)
Herts.	— (—)	125 (16)	— (—)	6 (1)	28 (1)	159 (18)
Middx.	2 (2)	17 (5)	34 (7)	46 (6)	10 (4)	109 (24)
Inner London	— (—)	— (—)	120 (6)	— (—)	6 (2)	126 (8)
Bucks.	— (—)	6 (2)	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)	6 (2)
Kent	2 (1)	9 (4)	19 (4)	— (—)	1 (1)	31 (10)
Surrey	— (—)	6 (3)	24 (7)	32 (3)	2 (2)	64 (15)
<i>Total</i>	4 (3)	271 (39)	212 (30)	178 (13)	48 (11)	713 (96)
% of total	— (3)	38 (40)	30 (31)	25 (14)	7 (12)	100 (100)

Sites that held a minimum of at least 20 pairs in 1984 are listed in Table 4. There are no obvious habitat characteristics applying to all sites. Four of them, Netherhall and Cheshunt gravel pits, Walthamstow Reservoirs and St. James's Park, have islands on which the ducks nest, the latter being provided with nest-boxes, some of which are used by Tufted Ducks (M. Kerr *pers. comm.*). At Netherhall, some females additionally nest on secluded peninsulars, while those at Rye Meads nest on undisturbed vegetated banks of lagoons (J. Fitzpatrick *pers. comm.*). Few broods are usually reported from either Stanstead Abbots or Barn Elms.

Table 4. Sites where the minimum number of pairs of Tufted Ducks counted between May 19th and June 3rd 1984 exceeded 20.

	No. of pairs		No. of Broods	
	Min	Max	Max 1980-83	1984
<i>Essex</i>				
Netherhall G.P.	30	51	20	12
Walthamstow Res.	92	125	47	38
<i>Herts</i>				
Cheshunt G.P.	20	24	18	11
Rye Meads S.F.	28	63	46	21
Stanstead Abbots G.P.	35	40	3	2
<i>Inner London</i>				
St. James's Park	68	68	35	22
<i>Surrey</i>				
Barn Elms Res.	24	39	5	3

DISCUSSION

The assessment of between 783 and 1,027 pairs of Tufted Ducks based on the survey is far in excess of any previous estimate of the breeding population in the London Area. Taking Montier's (*op.cit*) estimate of 350 pairs as applicable to 1970, the average annual increase to give the minimum population in 1984 would have been 6% or, to give the maximum population, 8%. This compares with an annual average increase of 13% between 1960 and 1970, taking 100 pairs as the population in 1960. Over the whole period from 1960 to 1984 the average annual increase would have been between 9% and 10%. These rates of increase are high compared with other successful British species. Gannets *Sula bassana* increased in Britain by between 2.4% and 3.4% per annum between 1939 and 1969 (Nelson 1978), Kittiwakes *Rissa tridactyla* by between 3% and 4% per annum during various periods this century and Fulmars *Fulmarus glacialis* by between 6.4% and 16.5% per annum in the first half of this century but by 7% per annum between 1949 and 1970 (Cramp *et al.* 1974). The Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* which, like the Tufted Duck, favours gravel pits and has thus benefited from the increase in this habitat, especially in the southeast of England, increased in Britain between 1965 and 1975, on average, by 4% per annum (derived from data in Hughes *et al.* 1979) while in the London Area the average rate of increase between 1931 and 1975 was only 3% per annum (derived from data in Oliver 1977).

The Tufted Duck's ability to exploit newly available habitat in the form of gravel pits and reservoirs is well known and this has undoubtedly been important in the London Area. Yet some sites first colonised in the 1970s had been available since before that period, sometimes long before, for example Hampstead Heath and Brent Reservoir, at both of which regular breeding did not commence until the mid-1970s but where up to six and 14 pairs respectively have occurred in recent years. Similarly at Regent's Park,

although breeding commenced in the early 1930s there was a long period without breeding before it recommenced in 1954. There is no evidence as to whether such sites have been colonised or re-colonised because of availability of suitable food, the growth of suitable cover for nests, a reduction in human disturbance or some combination of these. Yarker and Atkinson-Willes (1971) attributed the original expansion to climatic change while Sharrock (1976) quoting Olney (1963) suggested that the increase had been helped by the introduction of the zebra mussel, now a staple food. This was found in the London Docks in 1824 and had spread to 42 vice-counties by 1950. Possibly the species has also become more tolerant of man.

No full surveys of Tufted Ducks have been made in adjacent regions in the breeding season, but an assessment of population levels can be made from published information. Details are given in the Appendix, which suggests for those parts of the home counties outside the London Area together with Sussex, the following number of pairs: Essex-270, Hertfordshire-23, Middle Thames Natural History Society recording area-37, Surrey-25, Kent-170 and Sussex-115. Taking the minimum population of 783 pairs for the London Area gives a minimum total of about 1,400 pairs for southeast England, as defined. The latest estimate of the summer population of Tufted Ducks in Britain is 45,000 individuals (Tuite and Owen 1984). The London Area thus holds rather more than half of the potential breeding population of southeast England and up to 6% of the National population.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful to the large number of people who took part in the survey. I thank Eric Gillham for helpful discussion and encouragement and for his comments on drafts of this paper. Ken Osborne drew the illustrations with his customary skill.

SUMMARY

A survey of Tufted Ducks in the London Area between May 19th and June 3rd 1984 revealed between about 800 and 1,000 potential breeding pairs. This represents an annual average increase of between 6% and 8% since the last assessment in 1968-1972. The population, which may still be increasing, accounts for over half of the breeding pairs in southeast England (the home counties and Sussex) and for up to 6% of the British population.

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APPENDIX

Breeding population of Tufted Ducks in counties adjacent to the London Area and in Sussex

Relationship between numbers of pairs and numbers of reported broods.

Since published data about breeding Tufted Ducks often refer only to broods, it would be useful if the relationship between the number of broods seen and the number of pairs present in late May/early June could be established. With the data available only rough approximations are possible since the ratio will be affected by hatching success, brood survival and observer effort, none of which was measured in the present survey. Two comparisons have been made for this purpose. The maximum brood count from sites visited in 1980-83 has been compared with the number of pairs reported from those sites in 1984; a similar comparison has been made between the number of broods reported in 1984 and the pairs counted at those sites during the survey. The results are set out below.

	1980-83	1984
Number of broods	321	163
Minimum number of pairs at brood sites based on 1984 survey	553	423
Ratio of pairs to broods	1.7 : 1	2.6 : 1

The number of broods in 1984 is less than the 186 reported in *LBR* 49 as broods are necessarily omitted from this comparison if the site was not visited in the survey period. The two comparisons reveal pairs exceeding broods by factors of 1.7 and 2.6; the actual ratio will have been higher because of hatching and brood failures. The much higher proportion of pairs counted in the survey (minimum 783) to broods later reported in 1984 (186), giving a ration of 4.2 : 1 may also reflect the relatively much poorer observer coverage in the brood period compared with the census period.

Pairs to brood ratios can also be calculated from published information. At Hanningfield Reservoir, Essex, 35 clutches in one year produced 21 broods (Cox 1984); assuming that these did not include any re-nesting attempts this implies a pair to brood factor of at least 1.7 : 1. At Sevenoaks, Kent between 1966 and 1973, a total of 63 pairs produced 31 broods (Harrison, 1974) a factor of 2 : 1. Montier's (1977) estimate of 350 pairs in the London Area 1968-72 compared with the maximum brood counts for 1965-69 and 1970-74 (see Table 1) gives factors of 2.3 and 3.3 : 1 respectively. A factor of 2.5 has been used for the purposes of this appendix; this is arbitrary but gives a better indication of the number of pairs than relying on brood counts alone. Estimates of Tufted Duck numbers follow.

Essex

Cox (1984) lists recent maximum brood counts aggregating 68 from four sites outside the London Area. He also refers to breeding at 40 other sites. Assuming (on the basis of known records from the London Area) that half these are outside our Area and that on average there were two broods per site would give a maximum brood count for that part of the county outside the London Area of 108. Applying a factor of 2.5 would imply a nesting population of about 270.

Hertfordshire

The Herts. Bird Report for 1981 lists 23 pairs outside the London Area.

Middle Thames Natural History Society recording area

Recent issues of the Middle Thames Report give no data. The most recent information is given in the 1979 report which suggests there were about 15 broods in that year outside the London Area. Multiplying by 2.5 implies about 37 pairs.

Surrey

Parr (1972) gives no population estimate, nor sufficient details from which to calculate one. The most recent Surrey Bird Report to give any detailed information is that for 1979 which lists five occupied sites outside the London Area but gives no details of the number of pairs or broods. Assuming, on the basis of the data in Table 1, at least two broods per site and applying a factor of 2.5 to the result gives 25 pairs.

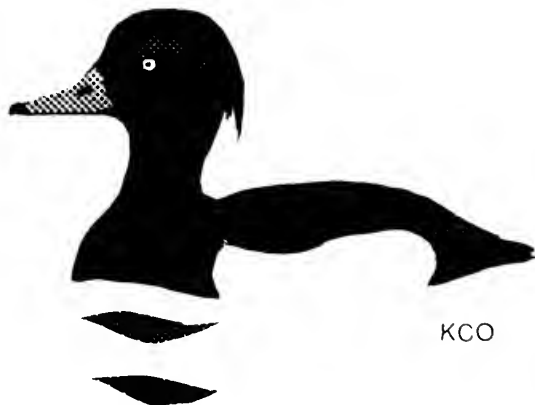
Kent

Taylor *et al.* (1981) estimate *c.* 70 pairs in the 1970s. The Kent Bird Reports for 1982 and 1983 record 108 and 152 pairs respectively. The majority of these counts were of pairs rather than broods so it seems unlikely that the county total currently exceeds 200 pairs, of which about 30 would be in the London Area.

Sussex

Shrubb (1979) estimates *c.* 75 pairs. A similar figure is given in the Sussex Bird Report for 1982 with the comment that the species was poorly recorded in the breeding season. The 1983 report gives 39 broods and a further 16 pairs elsewhere. Multiplying the brood count by 2.5 gives a county total of about 115 pairs.

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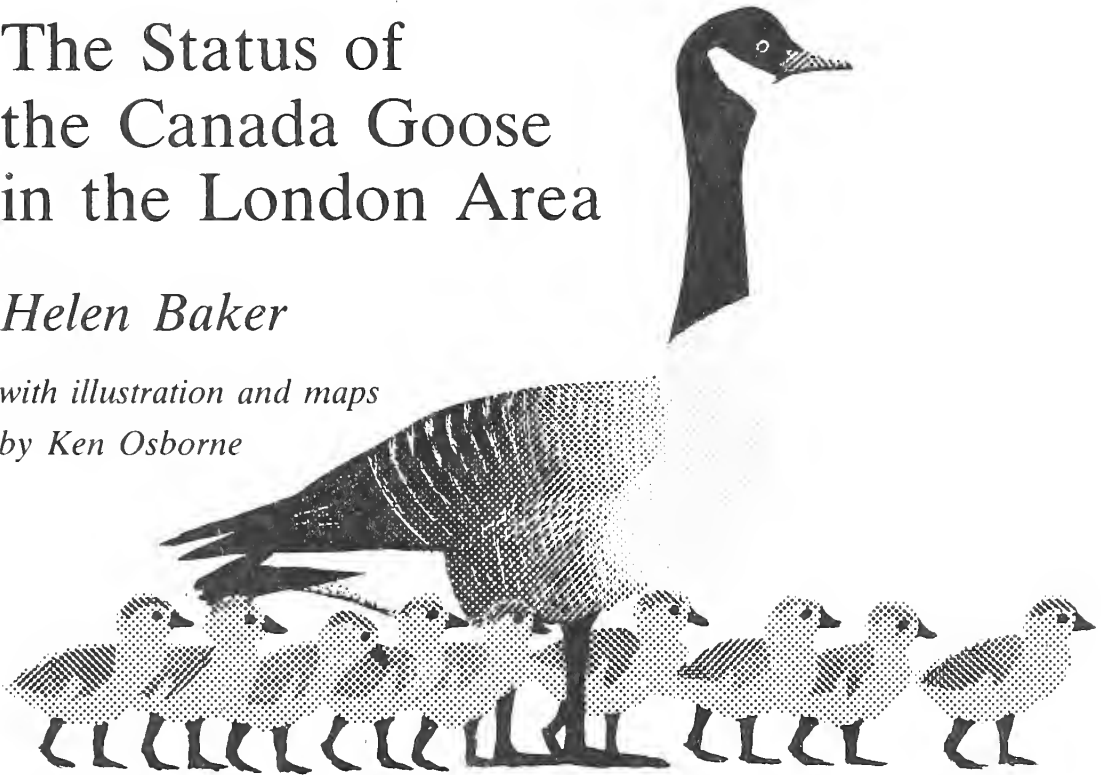


The Status of the Canada Goose in the London Area

Helen Baker

with illustration and maps

by Ken Osborne



KCO

INTRODUCTION

The number of Canada Geese *Branta canadensis* in Britain has been increasing spectacularly during the last 30 years, and this trend has also been in evidence in the London Area. A survey was undertaken to trace the change in the status of the Canada Goose in the London Area since 1953 (with a brief review of earlier data) and to get as precise an assessment as possible of breeding numbers and distribution in 1983. This was followed by counts in September 1983 and January 1984.

BACKGROUND

The Canada Goose was first introduced into Britain as an ornamental waterfowl in the seventeenth century. By the early twentieth century a number of feral flocks had become established. Blurton Jones (1956) put the total British population at between 2,200 and 4,000 birds in 1953. They were distributed in discrete localised sub-populations each with a rather restricted range and there was little movement between them. However, by this time flocks on some waters had become too large. During the years 1953-1957 surplus birds were rounded up by the Wildfowl Trust which distributed them to other sites. The Wildfowlers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland (WAGBI) then took over this task. A second national Canada Goose Survey took place in 1967-1969 when Ogilvie (1969) put the British population at about 10,500 birds, a threefold increase since 1953.

Most of the sub-populations described in 1953 were still recognisable though some had extended in area and there were some new ones. The increase had undoubtedly been aided by the dispersal of geese by the Wildfowl Trust and WAGBI. Most had settled in the sites to which they had been taken but there were reports of geese homing over 100 miles and no doubt some failed to get home and instead found new waters. The flocks on estates from which geese had been taken soon built up again unless they were deliberately controlled. After a third national survey in 1975-76, Ogilvie (1977) put the number of Canada Geese in Britain at 19,400. Once again some sub-populations had extended their range and there were further new ones. Links between some sub-populations were suggested. Taking the

results of the three surveys, there had been a fairly constant overall growth rate of about 8% per annum for the 23 years 1953 to 1976; nor was there any sign of its slowing down.

RESEARCH AND SURVEY METHODS

a) Records up to December 1982

Canada Goose records were extracted from Bird Reports and other literature and also from the LNHS Ornithological record cards. Data for the London Area were extracted from the reports on the national surveys.

A list was made of all the sites at which breeding was recorded each year between 1953 and 1972 and each site was allocated to its tetrad. The data were then mapped to show which tetrads were first occupied in each ten year period 1953-62; 1963-72 and 1973-82. All breeding records were tabulated to show for each year the number of sites occupied, the number of pairs and the number of goslings.

In using this information for the period up to the end of 1982, it must be borne in mind that these are just casual records, submitted because observers considered them to be of interest.

b) The 1983 surveys

The breeding survey was linked to the BTO Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* Survey which involved a visit during April and May to all waters where Mute Swans might breed. It was hoped that new Canada Goose breeding sites would be located during this work. The main Canada Goose survey consisted of a count of geese and goslings between May 28th and June 19th. These dates were chosen so that most goslings would have hatched, but the oldest would not be so big that it would be difficult to separate them from adults in a large mixed flock. One record form was to be completed for each site where geese were found. Observers were asked to record the date of the visit and the number of goslings, adults with goslings and other adults. The survey was based primarily on the number of goslings, rather than the number of pairs because some young sometimes combine in creches under the supervision of just a few adults (Hughes and Hughes 1981; Thomas 1977) and non-breeders may intermingle with families. It was appreciated that failed breeders would be overlooked as it was not possible to differentiate them from immature birds as non-breeders which might be present at a site. If on an early visit a nest was recorded, the site was included as a breeding site for the purpose of the analysis. Where sites were watched regularly and more accurate counts of goslings made after June 19th were available, these were used. Breeding records submitted direct to the recorders were checked and additional records were noted. As the count was made over a 23 day period, some duplication of non-breeding birds is possible.

In an attempt to get some information about any interaction between Canada Geese and Mute Swans, observers were asked how many pairs of Mute Swans held territories at the site, how many of these were seen with cygnets and to give details of any inter-specific aggression between Canada Geese and Mute Swans that was observed.

In most of those 10 km squares which, for BTO purposes, are within Hertfordshire a more general county recording-form was used. This did not ask specifically for the number of goslings to be recorded, nor for information about Mute Swans at the site. In the few instances where the number of goslings was not given it was assumed that each pair had four, the average number of goslings per pair recorded in 1983.

In the following autumn and winter, two co-ordinated counts were conducted. An analysis of all the recorded counts for the August to March period from August 1975 to December 1981, showed that most sites had their highest numbers of geese in January or September. The counts were

therefore made in those months and to avoid duplication they were linked with the National Wildfowl Counts on September 18th 1983 and January 15th 1984.

On the recording form observers were asked to enter the site name and grid reference, the time of the count, the number of Canada Geese and, where relevant, the direction from which they arrived or in which they departed.

It was recognised that to get completely valid data the counts should be made at the same time of day at every site. This was obviously not possible and the results of this less precise survey must be treated with caution. An attempt was made to eliminate obvious duplications during the analysis. In the event it proved necessary to accept some counts which were not made on the specific days. Even with these limitations it is hoped that the counts give a better indication of the number of Canada Geese in the London Area than was available previously.

Completed survey forms, and a copy of the historical records and a list of sources have been deposited in the London Natural History Society Library.

HISTORICAL DATA FOR THE LONDON AREA

The first Canada Geese to be recorded in the London Area were those in Charles II's collection in St. James's Park. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the fashion for keeping Canada Geese as ornamental park birds spread through the country and they bred freely on some estates. A Canada Goose was shot on the River Thames at Brentford in 1731. This is apparently the first record of an escaped bird (Lever 1977). During the two centuries the number of free-living geese in Britain increased. Records for the London Area up to the end of 1954 are summarised by Homes (1957).

The first record of a feral Canada Goose breeding in the London Area came from Godstone in 1905. By the late 1920s and early 1930s there were records of feral flocks within the London Area at Gatton Park and Painshill Park, Cobham. There were also flocks quite close to the London Area boundary on Takeley and Hallingbury Lakes in the vicinity of Hatfield Forest, Essex. The Gatton Park flock was first noted in 1929 or 1930 and built up rapidly to about 200 geese. They spread to adjacent waters to breed but from 1935 to 1937 eggs at Gatton were destroyed in an effort to reduce the numbers. However, as a result of military occupation during the Second World War the birds deserted Gatton. Some waters close to London were drained deliberately during the war and many flocks including those at Takeley and Hallingbury Lakes were killed or dispersed at this time. In the first ten years after the war there were only occasional sightings of Canada Geese in the London Area. The first post-war breeding record came from Painshill Park in 1949.

In the 1953 census Blurton Jones (1956) gave only one record for the London Area, an introduced pair at Valentine's Park, Ilford (TQ 48) which hatched four goslings. The nearest sub-population to the London Area was centred on Englefield Green, Surrey, where there were 100-180 birds. Between 1948 and 1951 this colony increased and spread, but from 1952 eggs at Englefield were deliberately destroyed. Frequent movements between Englefield and the waters in Windsor Great Park were reported. Gatton, Painshill Park and Hatfield Forest were recorded as extinct colonies. While possibly a few pairs were overlooked, the survey shows that in 1953 the Canada Goose was a very scarce breeding species in the London Area.

In May 1954 four Canada Geese were added to the collection in Kensington Gardens. The following year 17 free-flying geese from Stapleford Park in Leicestershire and Swinton Park in Yorkshire were released by the Wildfowl Trust in Hyde Park. Later some of these or their young were transferred to Regent's Park and Hampton Court. In 1956 the Wildfowl

Trust presented 16 geese to the Sevenoaks Reserve. At about the same time the Kent Wildfowlers' Association introduced a small number of free-flying geese in the county in order to establish a breeding stock.

Regular breeding was recorded at Painshill Park from 1956. In 1957 birds from the expanding colony around Englefield spread into the London Area and bred at Wraysbury gravel pits (TQ 07).

Table 1 shows how the number of casual breeding records sent to the recorders increased from 1953 to 1982. In Fig. 1 these records have been mapped on a tetrad basis to show the spread of the Canada Goose in the London Area during this period.

Table 1. Summary of breeding records 1953-82.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Sites</i>	<i>Pairs</i>	<i>*Number of Goslings</i>
1953	1	1	4
1954			
1955			
1956	2	3	13
1957	3	3	10
1958	2	2	5
1959	7	10	10
1960	7	4	22
1961	6	12	24
1962	6	14	28
1963	8	15	33
1964	10	24	64
1965	12	22	80
1966	9	22	46
1967	17	43	121
1968	13	33	81
1969	14	35	107
1970	18	32	86
1971	13	9	81
1972	17	31	96
1973	15	27	100
1974	15	49	152
1975	21	48	278
1976	23	43	251
1977	26	51	293
1978	29	66	315
1979	32	87	310
1980	30	111	297
1981	33	101	230
1982	33	143	322

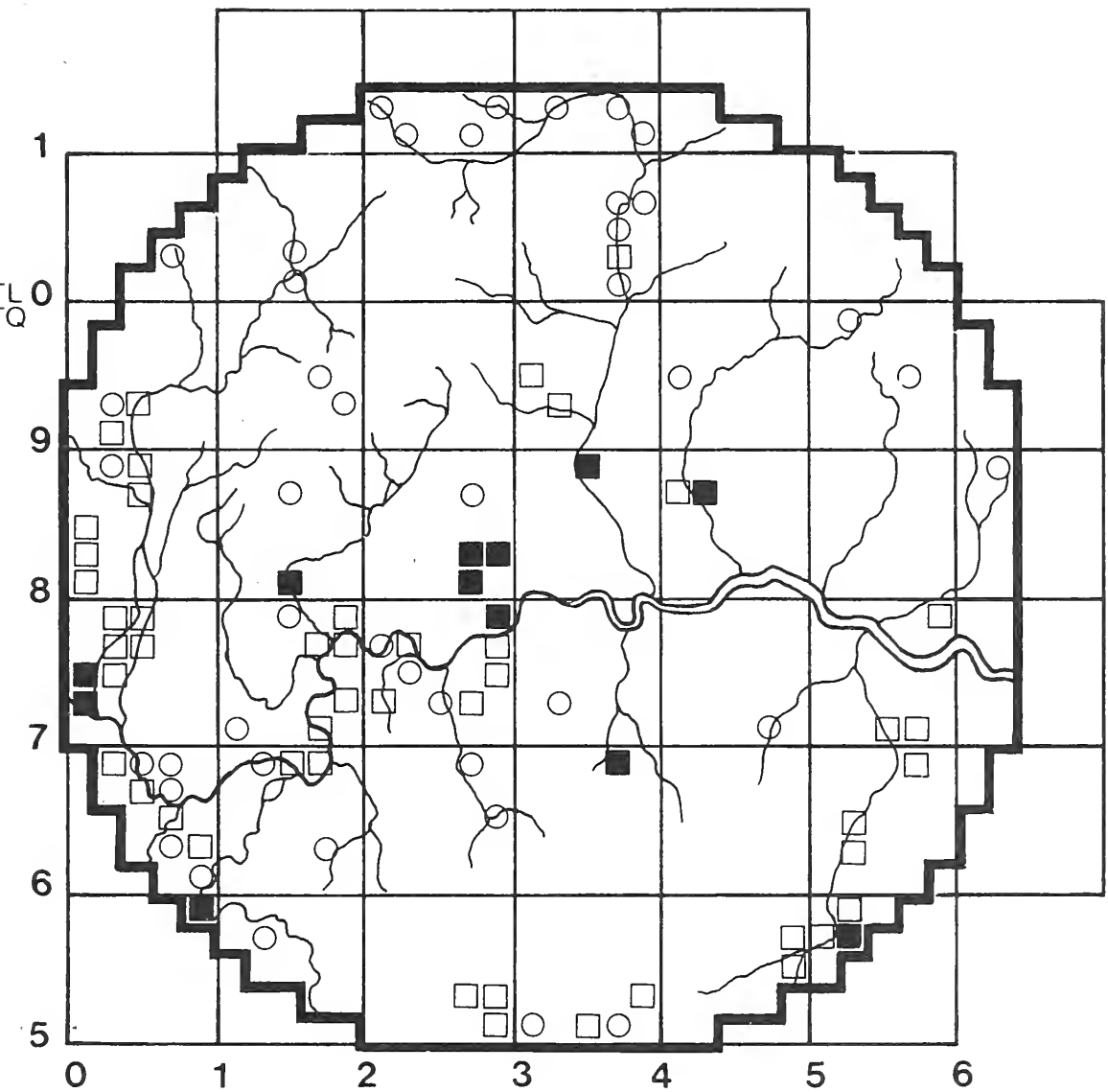
*In some cases only the number of pairs or the number of goslings were given.

Reference has already been made to most of the pre-1963 sites. Records also came from Walthamstow Reservoirs, Southall Mill pond (TQ 18) and from Kelsey Park, Beckenham (TQ 36) where the birds were full-winged but possibly introduced.

Between 1963 and 1972 records came from several new breeding areas:

- i) along the Darenth valley (Kent),
- ii) between Gatton and Oxted (Surrey),
- iii) along the Thames valley from TQ 27 (Clapham Common) westward,
- iv) northward from Wraysbury up the Colne valley to Rickmansworth (Hertfordshire) and
- v) in parks at Southgate and Edmonton (TQ 39) and Wanstead (TQ 48) and in the Lea valley near Cheshunt.

From 1973 to 1982 sites in the Lea valley from Cheshunt up to Brocket Park were colonised. Breeding records also came from sites such as Lower Highgate Pond on Hampstead Heath and Aldenham Reservoir which are away from the main river valleys.



- Post-war breeding first recorded in 1953-62 (incl. one record from 1949).
- Post-war breeding first recorded in 1963-72.
- Post-war breeding first recorded in 1973-82.

Fig 1. Tetrads in which breeding was recorded 1953-82.

Table 2 gives the highest count during the year at a number of well-watched localities for the period 1955-83. It supplements the breeding data in Fig. 1 suggesting for example that geese were largely absent from the Gatton and Holmethorpe area until 1967 and that the upper Lea valley was rarely visited by geese until the 1970s. It also shows how numbers have increased at these particular localities.

Table 2. Highest count each year at either one named site or any one site within a specified area 1955-1983.

Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	
St. James's Park & Regent's Park	17	30	*	*	32	*	70	40	20	56	74	85	102	142	200	100	116	150	210	150	175	172	240	225	290	250	300	310	335	
Sevenoaks Gravel Pit	16	24	48	48	64	80	80	70	130	160	160	155	165	270	354	240	300	160	350	300	320	300	200	106	240	230	209	449		
Wraysbury Gravel Pit	7	2	104	9	70	60	15	28	100	9	70	30	61	80	41	102	252	127	280	300	600	200	93	244	204	65				
Harefield, Rickmansworth Area							4	4	9	11	5	50	22	24	86	100	125	140	280	260	175	355	350	461	450	320	435			
Walthamstow Reservoirs	2	7	7	2	1	1	1	7	95											2	13	32	48	83	102	211	164	230	360	337
Lea Valley in TL30 and 31	3						1	3	1	7	53	4	2	*	20	18	165	200	172	240	325	451	334							
Stanborough Park, Brocklet Park Panshanger Park and Cole Green																														
Gatton Park and Holmethorpe																														

*Birds noted but no count given.

Table 3 summarises the data for those sub-populations wholly or partly within the London Area revealed in the 1967-69 and 1975-76 surveys (Ogilvie 1969 and 1977).

Table 3. Summary of counts of Canada Geese, in sub-populations in, or partly within, the London Area, made during second and third national surveys.

<i>Area supplied by sub-population</i>	<i>Count in 1967-1969</i>	<i>Area occupied by sub-population</i>	<i>Count in 1975-1976</i>
London: Hyde Park, River Thames near Kew	130	London: Hyde Park; River Thames at Kew: Wimbledon Park	100
South Berkshire, north Hampshire, west Surrey, south Buckinghamshire: lakes and gravel pits in Aldershot – Reading – Newbury triangle, Chertsey lake, waters in Windsor Great Park and Wraybury gravel pits	570*	West Surrey, north Hampshire, southeast Berkshire, southwest Hertfordshire, west Middlesex: A large complex of gravel pits and lakes in and around the Thames valley from Newbury and Reading to Slough and south to Guildford; includes Windsor Park	2470
North and Central Kent: gravel pits and lakes near Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells	340	Central and West Kent: gravel pits and large lakes near Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells	360†
		East Hertfordshire: Lea Valley reservoirs and gravel pits	70

*The actual total was probably much higher. 570 was the largest simultaneous count.

†Little growth partly because of a deliberate attempt to control numbers by shooting.

Table 4. Ringing controls and recoveries in or near to London.

<i>Ringed</i>	<i>Controlled</i>	<i>Recovered</i>
1955 Hyde Park (birds ringed before release)	1966 2 in Hyde Park 1967 2 in Hyde Park up to 1969 one or more at Sevenoaks	
1956 St. James's Park (Brought from Wildfowl Trust population centre)		1969 Dead at Theale gravel pit Berkshire
? Mote Park (Kent)	Up to 1969 one or more at Sevenoaks	
June 26th 1965 Leybourne (Kent) (two juveniles)	July 2nd 1966 Leybourne	Nov. 13th 1969 Sevenoaks (Shot) Oct. 20th 1971 Sevenoaks (shot)
Apr. 10th 1968 South Norwood (two birds)	1970 Hyde Park (two birds)	
June 5th 1968 Lullingstone Castle (Kent)	1970 Hyde Park	
1964 Newhaven (Sussex)	Jan. 17th 1971 Godstone	
1963 Melton Mowbray (Leics)	1965 Bourne (Lincs)	1971 Sevenoaks (shot)
June 28th 1972 Darenth	June 29th 1974 Wolverhampton	
? Knebworth (Herts)		1974 Luton Hoo (Beds) (shot)
June 30th 1973 Clumber Park (Notts)		Sept. 21st 1978 Dorking (Surrey) (shot)
July 2nd 1978 Beaulieu Firth (Highland)		Jan. 13th 1979 Guildford (Surrey) (shot)

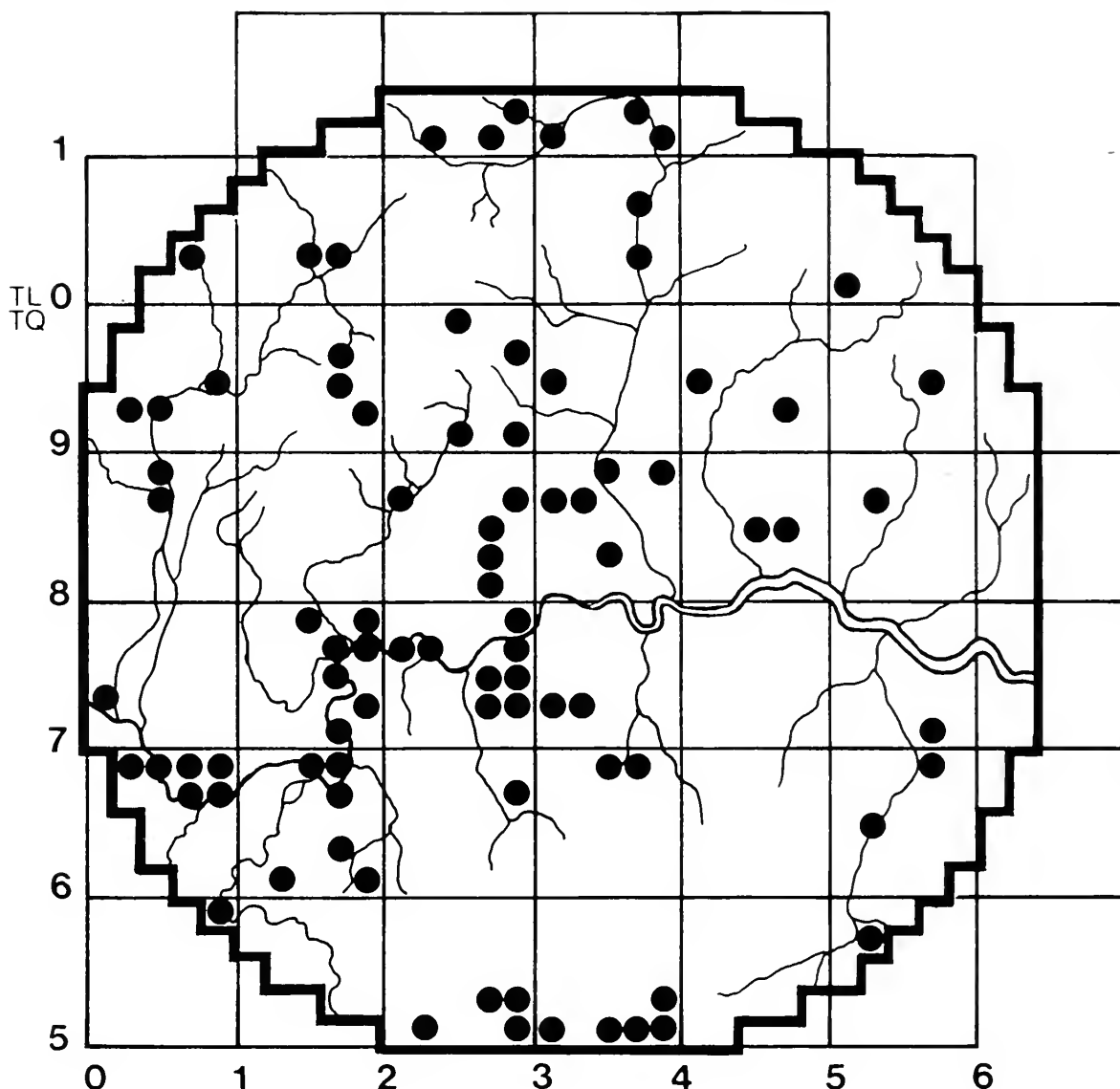


Fig 2. Tetrads in which breeding was recorded in 1983.

In 1977 Ogilvie suggested that the rapidly expanding south Berkshire population to the west of the London Area was possibly linked to (a) the Bedfordshire and north Buckinghamshire sub-population (including a flock at Luton Hoo on the River Lea just northwest of the London Area) to the north and (b) to the west and north Sussex, south Surrey sub-population to the east.

It is not possible to ascertain to what extent geese move within our Area or how far outside the Area they regularly go as there has been no large scale ringing of Canada Geese in the London Area. All the reports of ringing recoveries or controls which have been found in the literature are tabulated in Table 4. Some relate to sites just outside the London Area. These include a bird ringed on the Beaulieu Firth during the moult which was shot at Guildford. Most of the birds which fly north to the Beaulieu Firth to moult are non-breeders from Yorkshire (Walker 1970) but a small number from other areas have been found. Other long-distance movements include a bird ringed at Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, and shot at Sevenoaks and another ringed at Clumber Park, Nottinghamshire, shot at Dorking.

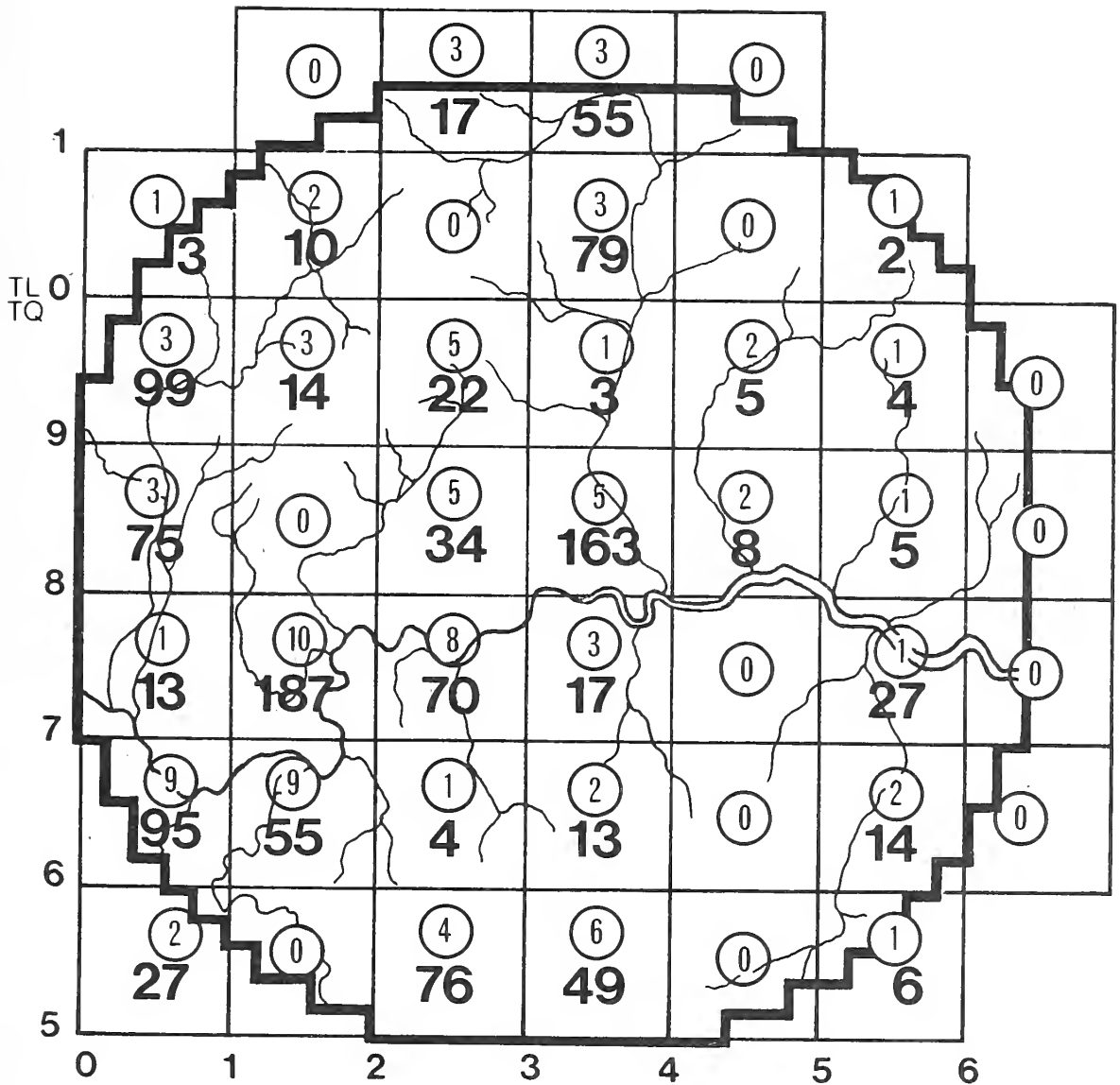


Fig 3. Number of breeding sites (encircled figure) and goslings counted (bold figure) for each 10 km square or part square.

Table 5. Summary of breeding survey results, by quadrant, with Inner London results given separately.

Area	sites	Number of		non-breeding birds	Total number of Canada Geese
		pairs	goslings		
Inner London	5	17	53	330	417
North-west	23	63	248	197	571 (671)*
South-west	42	106	503	467	1,182(1,256)*
South-east	15	30	126	155	341
North-east	18	82	321	135	620 (720)*
TOTAL	103	298	1,251	1,284	3,131(3,405)*

*These include totals for areas not adequately counted and are estimates of the approximate numbers.

Two of the geese brought to Hyde Park in 1955 were still there 12 years later. A goose which had been released in St. James's Park in 1956 was found dead by a gravel pit at Theale, Berkshire, 13 years later.

Using the casual records it is possible to make a tentative estimate of the number of Canada Geese in the London Area in selected years since the end of the war. In 1953 one pair of geese with four goslings was recorded. By 1963 it is likely that there were 25 to 30 pairs breeding at 14 sites. Up to 300 birds could probably be found in the London Area at this time. By 1973 it is probable that more than 100 pairs were breeding at some 60 sites and that there were some 1,000 geese in the London Area. Montier (1977) put the population at about 75 pairs in the early 1970s after the five year Breeding Bird Survey, 1968-72. This seems rather conservative. During that survey breeding records, or probable breeding records, came from 56 tetrads in 20 of the 44 10 km squares, or part-squares, which make up the London Area.

RESULTS OF SURVEY

Breeding Survey 1983

During 1983 Canada Geese were recorded breeding in 31 10 km squares or part-squares. The 88 tetrads from which the records came are shown in Fig. 2. Fig. 3 shows the number of breeding sites and the number of goslings recorded in each square. In table 5 these data and the approximate number of pairs are summarised on a quadrant basis, taking easting 300 and northing 800 as the axes, but with data for Inner London (i.e. the rectangle 5 miles \times 8 miles, centred on Charing Cross) given separately. Counts of non-breeding birds are also included. The greatest concentration of breeding geese was in the southwest with the largest number of goslings being recorded in TQ 17. The total of some 298 pairs with 1,251 goslings at 103 sites was certainly too low because there was no systematic coverage in TQ 07 and TQ 08 which contain many of the Colne valley gravel pits. Earlier years' records suggest that there were a further 12 pairs with about 50 goslings in these squares giving a breeding population of 310 pairs and a total of 1,300 goslings.

Breeding was recorded for the first time in TQ 29 (the Finchley area), TQ 58 (Hornchurch) and TL 50 (at Stapleford Tawney). There were no records from TQ 18, TQ 68, TQ 15, TQ 45 or TQ 47 where breeding has been recorded at some time during the past 30 years.

The count of non-breeding birds was not complete. In addition to birds in areas which were not surveyed, flocks in the Lea valley (Essex) were noted but not counted. I estimate at least 100 birds in the Colne valley and 100 in the Lea valley were missed. There were thus about 1,500 non-breeding birds in the London Area.

Table 6. Analysis of Breeding Sites.

<i>Type of site</i>	<i>Number of</i>		
	<i>sites</i>	<i>pairs</i>	<i>goslings</i>
Lakes or ponds in parks	41	90	369
Gravel or sand pits	30	106	502
Reservoirs	6	48	181
Ponds on commons, golf courses, farmland etc.	14	23	82
Sewage works	2	6	19
River Thames	10	25	98
TOTAL	103	298	1,251

In some parts coverage was excellent and overall it was satisfactory.

The breeding sites were grouped according to habitat. Table 6 shows the number of sites in each broad category and the number of pairs and goslings found at each. Park lakes and ponds accounted for 40% of all sites but only 30% of pairs bred there as opposed to 36% at gravel and sand pits. Reservoirs with the exception of the Walthamstow complex were of minor importance. Breeding geese were found on the River Thames in the southwest where there are a number of well-vegetated islands in the river.

Mute Swans were recorded holding territory at 28 sites but Canada Geese bred at only 18 of these. At ten sites no inter-specific aggression was recorded. At one site the Canada Geese failed, but no reason was given. At the remaining seven sites aggressive behaviour by the Mute Swans was noted. One pair of Canada Geese deserted its nest after being persistently chased by Mute Swans. The swans at the other six sites defended an area around the nest (in one case up to about 90 metres). At two sites a male Mute Swan was particularly aggressive towards the goslings. One was seen to pick up a gosling and throw it on to the grass bank.

Canada Goose counts in September 1983 and January 1984

The results of the counts on Sept. 18th 1983 and Jan. 15th 1984 are summarised in Table 7. Although most sites were visited on the set dates it proved necessary to accept some counts made earlier or later in the month. In two cases (TQ 08 — September and TQ 49 — January) no counts were received and estimates based on regular reports were used. The only counts for TQ 07 came from Wildfowl Count sites. Other waters and fields were not checked. No counts were received for TQ 35.

In September 3,010 and in January 2,545 Canada Geese were recorded. Their distribution on a tetrad basis and the total counts for each 10 km square or part-square are shown in Fig. 4 (September) and Fig. 5 (January). The highest counts in September were in the Inner London Royal Parks (460), Sevenoaks Gravel Pits (449) and Stanstead Abbots Gravel Pits (334). In January highest counts were from Walthamstow Reservoirs (329), the Inner London Royal Parks (305) and Highway Farm, Harefield (240).

In both September and January the greatest numbers were found in the southwest quadrant (i.e. the western part of the Thames valley). On a quadrant basis the most noteworthy change from September to January was the drop from 562 to 136 in the southeast quadrant. This was accounted for by the reduction at Sevenoaks on the edge of the London Area, where there were only 45 in January as opposed to 449 in September. Numbers at

Table 7. The number of Canada Geese in each quadrant, with Inner London results given separately, in September and January and the percentage change.

<i>Area</i>	<i>September</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>Change September to January</i>	<i>Percentage change</i>
Inner London	462	316	-146	-32%
North-west	592	690	98	+17%
South-west	734	820	86	+12%
South-east	562	136	-426	-76%
North-east	660	583	-77	-12%
TOTAL	3,010	2,545	-465	-15%

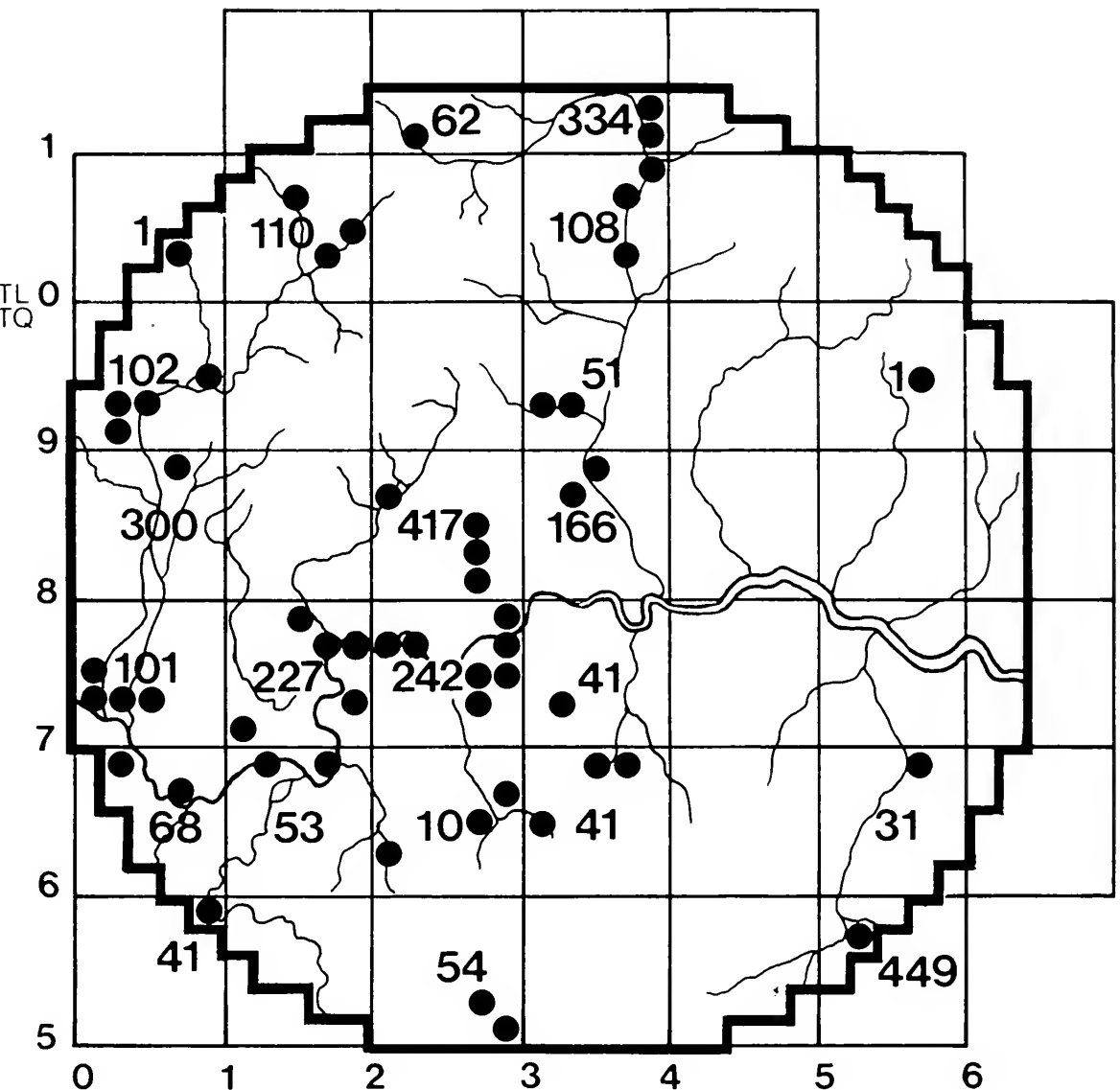


Fig 4. September 1983 count, showing tetrads in which the species was recorded and the total counts for each 10 km square. The total for TQ 08 is an estimate.

Sevenoaks are often at their highest in August or September and these birds visit other sites outside the London Area (Taylor 1977).

There was also an appreciable decrease from 426 to 316 in the Inner London area. Records for recent years suggest that in some years numbers are highest here during the moult and then decrease during the autumn. On the basis of the two counts it seems possible that between September and January there is a movement westward from Inner London.

A number of other local changes in distribution are suggested but it must be borne in mind that birds may move regularly from one 10 km square to another during the course of a day.

DISCUSSION

There is no doubt that during the last 30 years there has been a spectacular increase in the number of Canada Geese in the London Area, as there has been in the country as a whole. The BTO Survey in 1953 located one pinioned pair breeding in the LNHS Area. I estimate that in 1963 there were 25 to 30 breeding pairs and up to 300 geese in the London Area. By 1973

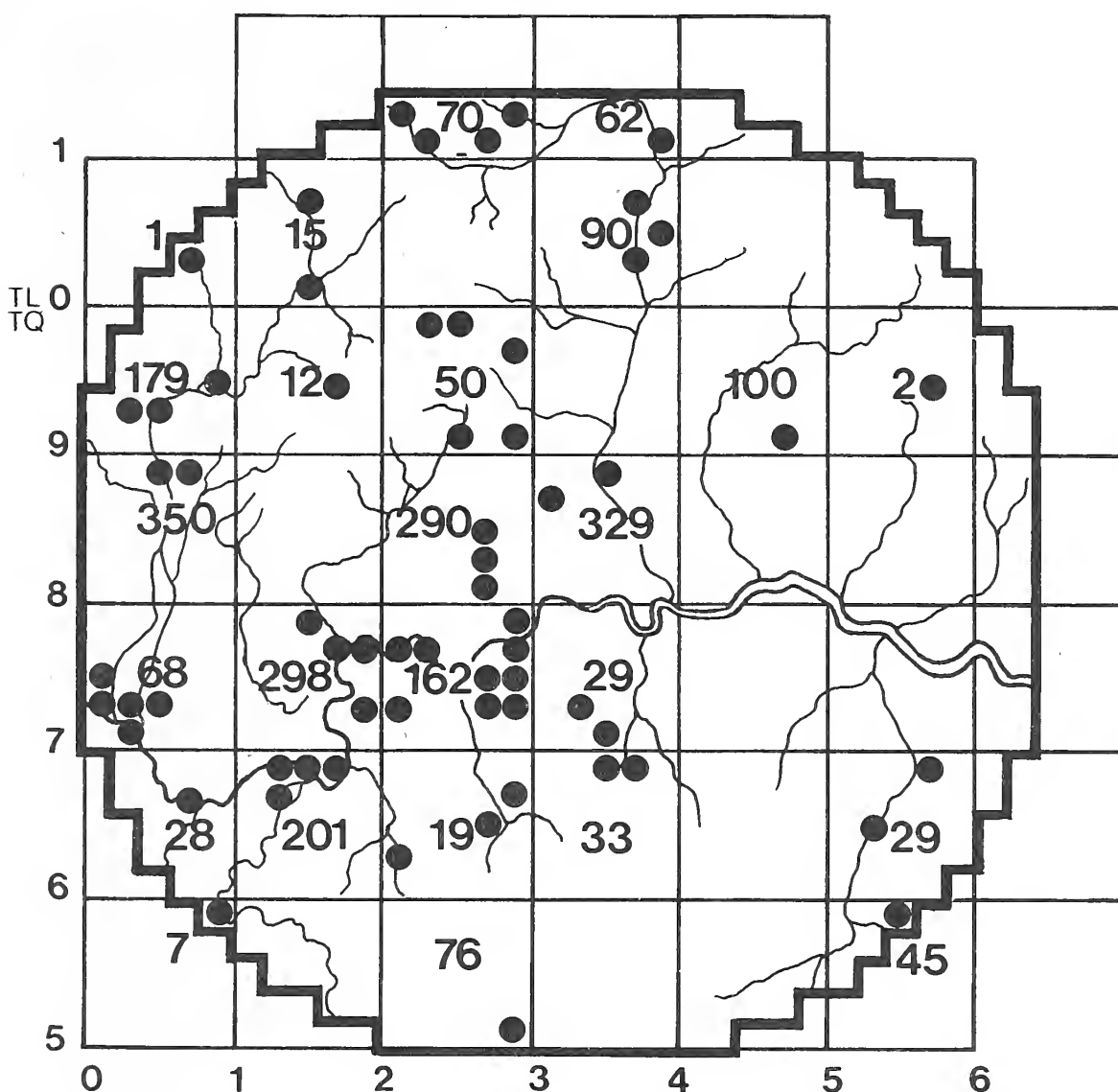


Fig 5. January 1984 count, showing tetrads in which the species was recorded and the total counts for each 10 km square. The total for TQ 49 is an estimate.

there were over 100 breeding pairs and up to 1,000 geese. In 1983 approximately 310 pairs with 1,300 goslings and a further 1,500 non-breeders were present. The total number of Canada Geese in the London Area ranged from about 3,400 (including goslings) in early June 1983 to 2,550 in January 1984. A decrease in numbers during this period resulting from mortality is to be expected. However when considering the change in numbers and distribution it is important to remember that the geese in the London Area are not a discrete population and there is movement in and out of the Area. This is illustrated by the change in numbers at Sevenoaks.

Looking at the historical data it is clear that some of London's Canada Geese, particularly in Surrey and to the west of London, originated from expanding feral flocks, but the deliberate introduction of geese also played an important part. The spread of geese through the London Area, as documented in the bird reports, correlates well with the picture presented by the three national surveys. However in both the 1967-69 and the 1975-76 surveys (see Table 3) the counts for the London population (130 and 100 respectively) look surprisingly low and it is thought that a number of sites

were overlooked. In 1968 *London Bird Report* gives a total of 174 birds in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, St. James's Park and Regent's Park during the flightless period in July. In December 1975 and December 1976 over 170 birds were recorded in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens alone.

In the absence of any large scale ringing programme it is not possible to tell how far individual geese travel. However the data in Table 3 suggests that there is some movement between the London Area and populations in the Midlands and a few London birds probably take part in the moult migration to the Beaulieu Firth.

The spread of the Canada Goose in the London Area has been facilitated by the numerous disused gravel pits along the main river valleys and by the many park lakes. Both gravel pits and park lakes frequently have well-vegetated islands on which the geese can nest. It is also noteworthy that geese are now nesting on islands in the River Thames, as the larger races do on islands in the rivers in Canada (Owen 1980). Ogilvie (1977) commented that, although large flocks are still to be found on park lakes, considerable concentrations of geese now rest on gravel pit complexes. This is borne out by the results of the present survey. Gravel pit complexes cover an extensive area, whereas lakes in parks may be comparatively small and in addition in some parks staff control the number of geese by removing at least some eggs.

A number of apparently suitable sites such as Berwick Ponds, Rainham Gravel Pits and Fairlop in Essex, were still unoccupied in 1983. However by 1984 geese had been recorded at some of these (M. K. Dennis *pers. comm.*). It therefore looks as if the spread through the London Area and thus the increase in overall numbers is still continuing. It is less clear whether the numbers in those areas which have been colonised for some time is still increasing or whether a limiting factor is beginning to take effect. The maximum counts at specified localities (Table 2) are not an ideal method of assessing this. They may not reflect the numbers normally present at the sites and in some London parks and at Sevenoaks for example, the numbers are controlled. The counts do however suggest a levelling off in the Rickmansworth/Harefield area. A better indication might be obtained by monitoring the number of breeding pairs, goslings and non-breeding birds at certain sites where geese are not controlled. If the number of breeding pairs or goslings levelled off, this might indicate that the maximum carrying capacity of the site had been reached. Where this happens there may be an increase in the non-breeding population, if nest sites are the limiting factor, or surplus birds may move out if food is limiting. This might be a factor contributing to the gradual spread of geese up the Colne and Lea valleys.

Food may limit the size of flock which an area can support, especially during the summer moult when the geese are flightless for three to four weeks. Canada Geese eat a wide variety of vegetable matter. They graze the grass in parks and around gravel pits and they take aquatic vegetation and leaves from trees overhanging the water. Away from the water they often feed on farmland. After the harvest flocks disperse during the daytime to feed amongst stubble in fields. In the Rickmansworth area (TQ 09) in September only 102 were located compared with 186 during the breeding survey. There were however 110 further up the Colne and Ver valleys in TL 10 where in the breeding season only 24 had been reported. The birds were feeding amongst the stubble and it was thought likely that they had moved out from Rickmansworth to take advantage of the food supply. In the winter when flocks also frequent the fields they feed on autumn-sown cereal. This brings the geese into conflict with farmers.

The Canada Goose is a large bird with few natural predators in this country. During the survey there were some reports of foxes *Vulpes vulpes* taking eggs or young and large domestic dogs presumably might do likewise. It also seems possible that Mute Swans may prevent or delay breeding by

Canada Geese on certain smaller waters which they might otherwise colonise. In parks eggs are sometimes pricked or removed in an attempt to control numbers, but at many sites it is doubtful whether this can be done without causing disturbance to other species. The Canada Goose has not proved a satisfactory bird from the wildfowlers' point of view, because it has become too tame, but shooting provides probably the only realistic means of holding the population below the carrying capacity of an area.

It seems likely that the Canada Goose will continue to spread through the London Area until virtually all the suitable habitat is occupied. The number of birds in the Area will depend on its carrying capacity which may vary over time as gravel pits are filled in, or new ones are dug, and on any control measures which are taken to limit the number of geese.

SUMMARY

The spread of the Canada Goose in the London Area is described. From 1944 up to the mid-1950s there were only occasional records. Subsequently, as a result of deliberate introductions and the expansion of feral flocks, numbers built up. In June 1983 there were approximately 310 pairs with 1,300 goslings and a further 1,500 non-breeding birds in the London Area. In September 1983 3,010 geese were counted. In January 1984 there were 2,545. The geese in the London Area are not a discrete population and there is movement in and out of the Area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of this survey is due primarily to the team of birdwatchers who undertook the counts and to the square stewards who organised the coverage. I am particularly grateful to those stewards whose areas held a large amount of potential habitat for which they obtained full coverage. I would also like to thank those who over the years have submitted Canada Goose records. Without their effort it would not have been possible to trace the spread of the species so clearly. I am particularly indebted to Peter Oliver and Ken Osborne who provided much constructive criticism of an earlier draft of this paper which gave rise to substantial improvements to its layout and presentation. Additionally I am also grateful to Mike Dennis and Ken Palmer who both commented on an early draft. Further thanks are once again due to Ken Osborne for his excellent drawing of the maps and figures.

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Ringling Report for 1984

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The request to ringling groups and individual ringers to submit their outstanding recoveries and controls again met with a good response. Other data and general comments received gave an interesting, although in some cases a rather puzzling, picture of the status of several species in 1984. The national concern regarding the population of certain migrant species resulted in several groups and individual ringers submitting recent years' totals for comparison with their 1984 ringling totals. A good breeding season for Common Terns was reported by the Rye Meads R.G., 97 chicks were ringed during June and July — 91 of which were reared on the specially prepared breeding rafts. As expected the number of Sand Martins ringed was well down. Additionally several ringers reported the absence of House Martins at quite a few traditional breeding sites, however this apparent reduction in the number of breeding pairs seems to have been confined to certain areas since autumn catches of this species were above normal at some ringling localities.

Exceptionally good numbers of Sedge and Reed Warblers were reported passing through the London Area during the spring, and breeding totals were apparently higher than in 1983. So it was disappointing to learn later in the year that the numbers of juveniles ringed of both species were considerably lower than in recent years. The ringling totals of Lesser Whitethroat and Garden Warbler were higher than those in recent years whilst Whitethroat and Willow Warbler totals showed a marked decrease at most of the regular ringling sites. An exception to the general decline in Willow Warbler numbers were the figures submitted by the Hersharn R.G. who reported a total of 333 ringed, which was higher than their 1983 figure. The breeding success rates of both Blue and Great Tits using nest-boxes was rather poor throughout the Area. The Runnymede R.G. reported that at one site, where a total of 36 nest-boxes are situated, only 23 (64%) were used; only six broods of each species were reared totalling 76 fledged young (39 Blue Tit and 37 Great Tit). The growth rate of the fledglings was considerably retarded, probably due to the cool weather and periods of continuous heavy rain in late May.

Mention was also made of a poor breeding season for all resident thrush species and of a substantial drop in the number of Blackbirds and Song Thrushes ringed in the late autumn/early winter period. Normally at this time of year there are influxes of both species into the Area — the reduced numbers were most evident at Dartford and Rye Meads. The number of Fieldfares ringed also appeared to be down although Redwing numbers were high; there was also mention of the latter species being successfully tape-lured down to nets. The small amount of data received for Starling makes comparison with previous years rather difficult, however totals for 1984 suggested a decrease in both resident and wintering numbers. Greenfinch numbers again peaked during March and April, one ringer reported a total of 1,800 ringed between mid-March and the end of April. Sixteen birds that had been ringed in southwestern counties during the winter months were controlled in the London Area during March and April; additionally six birds ringed in the London Area during the same two months were recovered in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk in May and June. Reports of the numbers of Siskins present, and ringed, in the early months varied considerably, some ringers reported exceptionally high numbers whilst others stated that totals were normal or low in their areas.

Previous Ringling Reports have drawn attention to many outstanding recoveries of ducks and gulls ringed in the Royal Parks in Central London,

several more are included in this report. Some idea of the numbers of passerines passing through the Royal Parks, between late July and mid-October this year, can be gauged from the following figures which relate to Regent's Park (the numbers in brackets are the totals ringed): Reed Warbler (2), Garden Warbler (10), Blackcap (32), Whitethroat (1), Lesser Whitethroat (3), Willow Warbler (17), Chiffchaff (5), Pied Flycatcher (2) and Spotted Flycatcher (1).

SELECTED LATE RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS FOR 1982-1983 AND NOTES OF INTEREST

The only 1982 Russian recovery worthy of mention was a Tufted Duck ringed in Kensington Gardens on Dec. 1st 1977 and which was shot at Khanty-Mansi, USSR on May 16th, 4,153 km east.

Late 1983 recoveries included a Tufted Duck ringed at Rye Meads on July 2nd 1982 and killed locally by a cat on Nov. 25th — although one of the principal bird predators it is unusual to hear of one killing an adult duck. Another Tufted Duck, ringed at Rye Meads as a chick on Apr. 15th 1982, was reported as 'found' at Dobryzin, Wroclawek, Poland on Nov. 18th, 1,318 km east. It is interesting to note that this bird was from the same brood as one recovered at Lough Ennal, Eire on Jan. 8th, 533 km northwest. A Black-headed Gull controlled in Regent's Park on Nov. 14th had been ringed at Christianshairns Vold, Copenhagen, Denmark on Apr. 5th, 980 km southwest. Another of this species controlled in the park four days later had been ringed as a chick at Lake Zhuvintas, Alytus, Lithuania, USSR on June 16th, 1,624 km west.

A Blackbird ringed at Kempton Park, Middx. on Feb. 16th 1980 was found dead near Stromsberg, Uppsala, Sweden on Aug. 26th, 1,496 km northeast. Another of this species ringed at Potters Bar, Herts. on Mar. 6th 1982 was found dead at Lavally, Mallow, County Cork, Eire on Dec. 15th, 579 km west. A Blue Tit ringed as a nestling in a nest-box at Maple Lodge, Herts. on June 12th was controlled at Bicester, Oxon. on Dec. 18th, 53 km northwest. The Maple Cross R.G. reported that on May 22nd 1983 a Blue Tit was sitting on ten eggs in a nest-box, when the box was opened on June 5th to ring the nestlings one dead adult and two addled eggs were removed — eight young were ringed. Seven out of the eight fledged, three of these were retrapped at the end of July. This appears to be a high success rate for one parent, unless the dead bird was an intruder. A Chaffinch ringed at Maple Lodge, Herts. on Feb. 15th 1981 was controlled at Antwerpen, Belgium on Nov. 5th, 343 km east. Two other birds controlled in Belgium were a Siskin ringed at Potters Bar on Feb. 23rd 1982 and controlled at Anzegem, West Vlaanderen on Nov. 4th, 271 km east-southeast and a Redpoll ringed at Chobham Common on Dec. 8th 1979 which was controlled near West Vlaanderen on Oct. 20th. Reed Bunting recoveries in recent years have shown that the species is more migratory than originally thought; one ringed at Bedfont Quarry, Middx. on Oct. 16th 1980 was controlled at Overbuurtse Polder, Bleiswijk, Zuid, Holland, Netherlands on Oct. 5th, 347 km east.

RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS 1984

There were five foreign duck recoveries: a Teal ringed at Rye Meads on Dec. 30th 1982 was shot at Nas, Gotland, Sweden on Sept. 1st, 1,318 km east-northeast; another Teal also ringed at Rye Meads, on Oct. 29th 1983, was shot at Crecy, Somme, France on Aug. 26th, 215 km southeast. A male Pochard ringed in Regent's Park was shot near Ukhta, Kome, USSR (just west of the Ural mountains) on May 18th, 3,449 km east-northeast. A Tufted Duck ringed in Regent's Park on Mar. 31st 1983 was shot at Monsterasiken,

Kalmer, Sweden on Sept. 22nd, 1,240 km east-northeast and another also ringed in Regent's Park, on Nov. 22nd 1983, was found dead at Muiden, Noord Holland, Netherlands on Oct. 4th, 370 km east. A Tufted Duck, ringed in Kensington Gardens in 1976, was retrapped again this year. There were three bird-of-prey recoveries: a Sparrowhawk ringed as a pullus at Hastoe, Herts. on July 10th 1983 was found dead at Barnet, Herts on Aug. 21st. A Kestrel ringed at Yeoveney G.P., Bucks on May 7th 1979 was a motorway victim near Staines, Middx. on Apr. 28th — less than one mile away. Another Kestrel ringed at Wembley, Middx. on June 5th this year was recovered between Nordelph and Downham Market, Norfolk on July 29th, 124 km northeast. A Coot ringed at Rye Meads on Dec. 23rd 1973 was found dead at Maidenhead, Berks. ten years and seven months later; another Coot ringed in Regent's Park on Jan. 25th 1982 was found dead at Pitsford Res., Northants. on Apr. 5th.

As in previous years there were only a few wader recoveries: a Little Ringed Plover ringed at Rye Meads on July 31st 1977 was controlled at Kempton Park, Middx. on Apr. 14th. A Dunlin ringed at Swanscombe Marsh, Kent on Mar. 30th was controlled at Swibno, Gdansk, Poland on Sept. 27th, 1,289 km east. The most distant wader recovery was a Snipe ringed at Bedfont Quarry, Middx. on Dec. 9th 1979 and found dead near Radekhov, Lvov, USSR on Aug. 2nd, 1,768 km east. A Redshank ringed at Swanscombe Marsh on Mar. 19th 1971 was retrapped on Mar. 31st, 13 years later — not a longevity record, but well worth a mention. There were 11 foreign recoveries of Black-headed Gulls — five in Sweden, four in Denmark, one in the German D.R. and one in Latvia, USSR. The most distant of these recoveries was one at Lulea, Sweden (at the northern end of the Gulf of Bothnia), 2,016 km northeast. Two Black-headed Gulls were recovered in the London Area, one which had been ringed in Lithuania in 1983 was caught in St. James's Park on Nov. 24th; the other, ringed at Godnowa, Wroclaw, Poland on June 11th, was presumably an early arrival since it was found dead at Queen Mary Res., Middx. on Aug. 12th, 1,233 km west. No recoveries of any other gull species were received. Two Common Terns, both ringed at Rye Meads as chicks, were recovered: one ringed on June 3rd 1978 was found dead at Winnersh, Berks. on Sept. 21st and the other ringed on July 22nd this year was found dead at Agadir, Morocco on Oct. 28th, 2,495 km south-southwest.

There were many Swift recoveries, mainly of local birds, one found dead on a road at Mitcham, Surrey on May 29th had been ringed nearby at Beddington S.F. on June 19th 1975, nearly nine years earlier. Three ringed at Kempton Park, Middx. in 1978 were recovered on the Continent, one was controlled in Belgium on May 23rd and the other two were found dead in France, the most distant being one at Soual, Tarn (just north of the Pyrenees) on June 18th, 894 km south. Another Swift controlled at Queen Mary Res. on May 28th had been ringed at Wakefield, Yorks. on June 13th 1980. The most outstanding recovery of the year was a House Martin ringed as a juvenile at Rye Meads on Sept. 10th 1983 and caught by a child at Ikwo, Anambra, Abakaliki, Nigeria on Feb. 26th, 5,133 km south — this is the first British-ringed House Martin recovery in Nigeria. A Blackbird ringed at Littlebrook, Kent on Mar. 13th 1983 was controlled at Heligoland, German F.R. on Mar. 30th, 597 km east-northeast; another ringed at Potters Bar, Herts. on Jan. 1st was found dead at Geltinger Bucht, Schleswig-Holstein, German F.R., 750 km east-northeast. One other Blackbird recovered on the Continent which 'hit glass' north of Nistelrode, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands on Nov. 23rd had been ringed at Mitcham Common on Mar. 11th, 395 km east. Several long-living Blackbirds were retrapped during the year, including one which had been ringed at Sevenoaks G.P. in 1973 (no dates given), 11 years later. The only other thrush recovery of over 100 kilometers

was a Song Thrush ringed at Rye Meads on Nov. 20th 1983 and found dead at Norwich, Norfolk on Apr. 5th.

Two foreign Sedge Warbler recoveries were received: one ringed at Rye Meads on Sept. 10th 1982 was found dying between Marrakech and Settat, Morocco on Aug. 24th, 2,235 km south-southwest; the other, ringed at Rye Meads as a pullus on June 13th was controlled at St. Seurin, D'Uzet, Charente Maritime, France on Aug. 7th, 710 km south. The most distant Reed Warbler recovery was a bird ringed at Bedfont Quarry on June 6th 1981 and 'found' at Trutas, Marinha, Grande Estremadura, Portugal on July 23rd, 1,455 km south-southwest. A juvenile of this species ringed at Rye Meads on Aug. 12th had only moved 30 km before flying into a window in Leadenhall Street, City of London on Sept. 2nd. The only Reed Warbler control worthy of note was one ringed at Vale Marais, Guernsey, C.I. on June 27th 1981 and controlled at Yeoveney G.P. on May 24th. A Garden Warbler ringed at Longbridge, near Warminster, Wilts. on Aug. 19th was controlled eight days later at Queen Mary Res. Another Moroccan recovery was a Blackcap ringed at Maple Cross on Sept. 4th 1982 and 'found' in West Sahara on Apr. 17th, 3,075 km south-southwest. A Chiffchaff ringed at Dunford Mill, Hungerford, Berks. on July 29th and controlled at Queen Mary Res. on Sept. 13th was the only recovery of this species above 50 kilometers. Retrap data on Willow Warblers tended to show that fewer of the species ringed in previous years returned to their territories — one ringed in 1979 and two in 1980 returned safely together with several ringed on later dates. One ringed at Queen Mary Res. on Aug. 25th 1983 and controlled at Purbrook Heath, Portsmouth, Hants. on Aug. 24th was the most distant recovery received.

Again the northwesterly movements of Goldcrests was in evidence, one ringed at Queen Mary Res. on Oct. 30th 1983 was found dead at Seaforth, Liverpool on Oct. 16th. Another ringed at Sevenoaks G.P. on Jan. 21st was controlled at Formby, Lancs. on Apr. 8th whilst another, ringed at Kempton Park on Mar. 31st, was controlled on the Calf of Man on Apr. 21st — it remains a possibility that some of these birds could be breeding in Ireland. A Long-tailed Tit ringed at Rye Meads on Aug. 23rd 1980 was killed by a cat at Norwich, Norfolk on Apr. 5th, 129 km northeast, this is an exceptional movement for this species. Other tit recoveries showing long-distance movements included a Blue Tit ringed at Streatham on Dec. 19th 1983 and retrapped at Adlestrop, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos. on Apr. 4th, 121 km west, and a Great Tit ringed at Queen Mary Res. on July 23rd 1983 which was controlled near Felixstowe, Suffolk on Mar. 29th, 136 km northeast. The only noteworthy *Corvidae* recovery was a Jay ringed at Headley Heath, Surrey on July 11th 1983 and shot at Rushall, Pewsey, Wilts. on Mar. 12th, 108 km west — quite a long distance for a locally bred bird.

Exceptionally high numbers of Chaffinches were reported in the Potters Bar area during the first three months of the year. One ringer netted 364 during March including one which had been ringed at Buren, Ameland, Netherlands on Oct. 9th 1983, 451 km west-southwest. Mention has already been made of the movements of Greenfinch wintering in southwestern counties, another of this species ringed at Rye Meads on July 2nd 1983 was also probably wintering in the southwest since its ring was discovered in a pellet at South Molton, Devon on Jan. 28th. Interesting retrap data on this species included one which was ringed at Rye Meads on June 27th 1982, controlled at Sonning Common, Oxon. on Aug. 12th 1982 and then retrapped at Rye Meads on Apr. 4th. Similarly another ringed at Rye Meads on July 4th 1982 was controlled at East Grinstead, Surrey on Jan. 8th and then retrapped at Rye Meads on May 6th. A ringer at Potters Bar, who also rings in Regent's Park, must have thought that one of this species was following him as he reported ringing a Greenfinch at Potters Bar on Jan. 30th

1982, controlling it in Regent's Park on July 14th 1983 and then retrapping it back at Potters Bar on Feb. 12th.

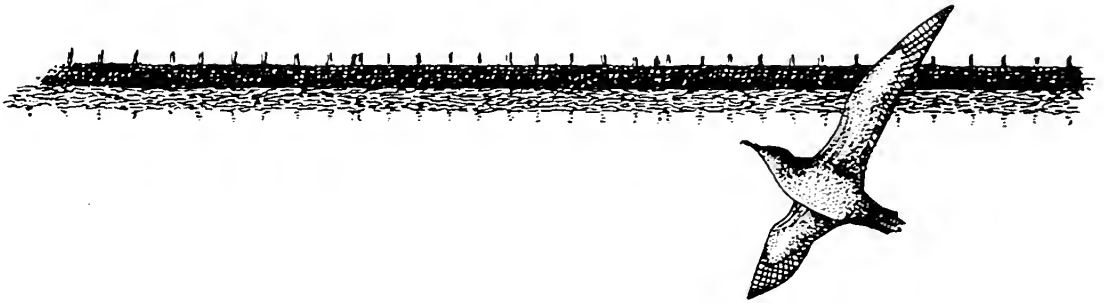
The only Goldfinch movement, other than local recoveries, was one ringed at Queen Mary Res. on Apr. 2nd and controlled near Stevenage, Herts. on July 21st. A Siskin which had been ringed at Polleur, Liege, Belgium on Oct. 22nd 1983 was controlled at Potters Bar on Mar. 24th, 442 km west-northwest. Another of this species ringed at Darenth, Kent on Feb. 26th was controlled at Golspie, Highland, Scotland on Apr. 15th. The most distant Linnet recovery was one ringed at Rye Meads on June 20th and controlled at St. Albans Head, Purbeck, Dorset on Oct. 1st; another ringed at Wilmington, Kent on Aug. 19th was controlled at Camp Farm S.F., Aldershot, Hants. on Dec. 22nd. 1984 was a poor year for Redpoll recoveries, one ringed at Attenborough, Notts. on Oct. 9th 1982 and controlled at Dartford Heath, Kent on June 10th was the only recovery worthy of mention. An increase in the numbers of Reed Buntings feeding in gardens during the winter months has been evident for several years, one ringed at Rye Meads on Aug. 14th 1983 was controlled in a garden at Potters Bar on Jan. 1st and then retrapped back at Rye Meads on Apr. 21st.

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Notes



GH '84

Balearic Shearwater — new to the London Area

At about 10.00 hrs. on Aug. 17th 1984, M. Lawford visited Island Barn Res. and observed what momentarily appeared to be a huge swift flying amongst a flock of hirundines. As the bird's flight settled down into a characteristic pattern he realised it was a shearwater. During half an hour's observation at long range he noted the shearwater's large size, its lack of contrasting black and white colouration, and its lack of any marking on the rump, leading him to think that it was a Cory's Shearwater. Fortunately he chose to let the news out that a large shearwater, probably Cory's, was present at Island Barn Res.

I duly arrived at 17.45 hrs. and was a little surprised to find no other observers present. Scanning carefully all over the reservoir I finally picked up what appeared to be the bird over towards the farthest bank. The impression was of a large dark seabird resting on the water. It took some time to walk round and obtain closer views, and only in the late stages of this approach did I see the grey bill and realise that the bird might not be a Cory's. Soon it became clear that only one shearwater fitted and that was the Balearic race of Manx, *P.p.mauretanicus*. Two more observers had arrived by this time and they found it difficult to accept that the shearwater was small enough for a race of Manx. Eventually, however, further discussion at the reservoir resulted in all concerned becoming certain that it was indeed a Balearic Shearwater, a most surprising occurrence inland. I took the following description.

Size and Shape. There was some controversy over the apparent size of the bird but to me it typically seemed a little longer and definitely somewhat bulkier than a Manx. In flight there was also a suggestion of broader wings than Manx. While swimming it appeared somewhat smaller than Mallards, in flight not much bigger than a Black-headed Gull. The head shape and facial expression were very reminiscent of Manx. Indeed a number of us had had similar views of an inland Manx at Tilehouse G.P. on June 7th 1983, followed by another at Staines Res. on Sept. 5th. The bill was quite long and prominent, rather narrow but with a good hooked tip.

Plumage. Upperparts very plain, dark, oily, dusky greyish-brown. The crown often appeared especially dark. Sometimes the face showed a blackish patch below and behind the eye, like part of a mask, this apparently being a shadow cast at certain angles. The chin and throat were whitish with a dusky grey suffusion, somewhat in contrast with the rest of the head but not sharply demarcated from it. The whitish extended in a patch up behind the ear-coverts, where it was duskiest than on the throat and had a very blurred margin. A thin, greyish-white eye-ring was present. The breast was fairly white with a dusky brown patch, lacking a sharp edge, on each side. The flanks were brown and the under-tail coverts were dark brown. The near

uniform upperparts showed only weak pale feather edges which were hard to discern.

In flight it showed medium grey underwings which were not at all whitish. The axillaries were dark grey-brown. The leading edges and much of the flight feathers were also dark on the underwing. The belly was largely white, in contrast to the greyish rear belly and vent. The upperwing appeared plain and uniform.

The bill was grey with a black tip. When the bird alighted, the pink feet could be seen.

Behaviour. Following my arrival the bird remained on the water for some time swimming about somewhat and looking well. It did not fly until 18.37 hrs. when it came close to us at the west end of the reservoir and displayed the typical stiff-winged shearwater flight. As the evening wore on, its flights became more frequent and it once passed close by near the water's edge, to the pleasure of all the onlookers. Occasionally a Black-headed Gull would pursue it, but it seemed perfectly well and was little troubled. It was amusing to see it head over to the undisturbed shores of the reservoir (in which the water level was well down), where it put up all the Lapwings and gulls in a panic as if some weird predator was approaching; even the large Lesser Black-backed Gulls were scared off. Each flight was preceded by a Coot-like pattering run across the surface and it once did this without choosing to take wing.

The Balearic Shearwater is an annual visitor to the English Channel in small numbers, occurring regularly as far east as Dungeness. A few find their way into the North Sea. At present a search of the literature has only revealed one previous inland occurrence in Britain. About 1865, one was found dead at Wingham in Kent, a village that lies about half-way between Sandwich and Canterbury.

The majority of Channel birds are seen between July and September, so that the mid-August date of the Island Barn bird fits in well with the usual pattern. In fact, along the nearest stretch of Channel coast in Sussex, August was the peak month between 1948 and 1976. The Balearic Shearwater spreads widely into the Atlantic following its breeding season spent on islands in the Western Mediterranean. The breeding season is much earlier than for Manx, and the first eggs are thought to be laid in mid-March. The incubation and fledging periods appear to be poorly known, but if one adopts the 121 days in total that it takes Manx, then the earliest young Balearics could be on the wing from mid-July. There is therefore plenty of time for both adult (which leave the nest site earlier) and young Balearic Shearwaters to be in the Channel by August, and the Island Barn bird could easily have been a stray juvenile.

Most records of Manx Shearwater in London are of juveniles but their time of occurrence is distinctly later, for the great majority have appeared in the first two weeks of September (Moon 1984). Typically they arrive after strong westerlies and it is thought that many are only recently out of the nest. The circumstances are very different for the Island Barn Balearic which could not have been blown all the way from its nest site. Furthermore there seem to have been no strong winds at the time. On Aug. 16th the wind direction was variable then on 17th it had become a light to moderate southeasterly, with clear and sunny skies following a more misty start to the day.

According to *The Handbook of British Birds* (1940), the Balearic Shearwater undergoes a complete moult between June and September. The primaries fall quickly one after the other and often the three outer ones are in various stages of growth, causing difficulty in rising from the water. No irregularities were noted in the primaries of the Island Barn bird, or in other parts of its plumage, which may indicate that it was a juvenile.

Some observers were clearly put off a correct identification by the

apparently large size of the bird. Most British observers may feel that Manx and Balearic Shearwaters are about the same size. However the measurements in *The Handbook of Birds of the Western Palearctic* prove otherwise. Simple calculations based on these figures show that, compared to Manx, Balearic is 3.8% longer in the wing, 11% longer in the bill, and 6.9% longer in the tarsus. More distinct, though, are the weights with Balearic averaging between 20 and 23% heavier. This difference would surely be appreciable in the field. It might be concluded that the Island Barn Balearic was indeed a 'large shearwater' and not just the size of a Manx.

The Balearic Shearwater was present until dusk on Aug. 17th but was not to be seen early the next morning. It looked fit and well and had probably departed overnight, perhaps to continue its peculiar off-course journey.

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Collared Pratincole at Staines Reservoir — new to the London Area

At about 09.20 hrs. on June 19th 1983, having just arrived at the western end of Staines Reservoir causeway with A. V. Moon and F. R. Cannings, I started to scan across the north basin through a telescope. The habitat consisted of a large expanse of shallow water, interspersed with wet and dried mud, shingle, sand and large areas overgrown with vegetation. After a few minutes, I noticed a small bird, facing away from me, at the edge of a pool about 500 metres away, with a group of Redshanks.

It was smaller than them, and showed a combination of long body, rather pale brown plumage, short legs and bill. After about 15 seconds, struggling with the distance in an attempt to get a clear view of the features of the bird, I suddenly realised it looked very like a pratincole.

It then half flew about three metres and landed on a fallen log, immediately revealing a white rump and forked tail. This more than confirmed my initial thoughts and, after pointing out the bird to AVM and FRC, we moved rapidly along the causeway until we were level with the bird.

In brilliant light and at much closer range (about 150 metres) any lingering doubts that the bird was a pratincole were immediately dispelled. After about five minutes watching the bird sitting on the log, it eventually took flight and started to fly over the reservoir. The light was so good, with bright sunlight behind us, that identification of the bird as a Collared Pratincole was relatively simple. Its flight was slow enough to be followed comfortably through a telescope, and the diagnostic features were easy to see; the bird showing a strong contrast between dark primaries and paler upperwing-coverts, a narrow white trailing edge to the dark secondaries, and very obvious reddish underwing-coverts and axillaries.

Following several telephone calls, about 30 or 40 observers managed to see the bird during the next three hours. The best views were obtained as it hawked back and forth along the pools near the causeway (down to 30 metres). At other times, it would land on mud banks and often run into low vegetation where it would be lost from sight. Several times it flew off high to the west over King George VI Reservoir and Staines Moor, often being lost from view for up to twenty minutes, before returning again flying back over the south basin, and once right down the causeway almost directly overhead. It was frequently mobbed by Black-headed Gulls when flying low over the water.

At about 12.30 hrs. the bird flew off high to the northeast in the direction of Heathrow Airport and was not seen again.

The following description was compiled from notes made by myself and AVM at the time:

Size was intermediate between Redshank and Ringed Plover, with a distinctive shape showing a combination of long wings and tail, short legs, horizontal posture, rounded head, short bill and a rather 'neckless' appearance. It was totally transformed in flight: wings long and pointed; long forked tail and tail-streamers. Very deep-breasted when seen at eye level. Its flight was lazy and elegant, hawking low over the water and swooping down very much in the manner of a marsh tern, but if anything, slower and more leisurely. It frequently hawked with Swifts, mostly low over the water, but also several hundred feet up on occasions. When it was being mobbed by Black-headed Gulls it would change gear and easily outpace its pursuers.

Only seen on the ground at long range, when the general impression was of a pale sandy brown bird, paler below, with few distinctive plumage features. Back feathers were very ruffled giving a distinctly 'scruffy' appearance. More detailed plumage features were noted at closer range in flight. Crown,

forehead and nape pale sandy olive-brown, contrasting with creamy throat patch, the latter encircled by a narrow black line from below the eye and around the throat, but clearest on the side of the face. Mantle and upperwing-coverts a similar colour to the head, but considerably paler than the dark brown primaries. Secondaries also dark brown showing a clear narrow white trailing edge, best seen as the bird flew directly away at eye level. The rump and tail were white, the former square and contrasting well with darker mantle, the latter with dark central feathers at base of fork and along the elongated tail streamers. Underparts were paler than the back, with breast and flanks buffish-olive, in contrast to the pure white belly and vent. The underwing showed dark primaries, but strong chestnut underwing-coverts and axillaries, this latter feature was not difficult to detect in the ideal viewing conditions. The bill was short, broad and slightly down-curved, dark with red at the base. Legs were short, colour not noted. The bird did not call.

This is the first London Area record of this species, although there are two old records of unidentified pratincoles. Six Collared Pratincoles were seen in Great Britain during 1983, equalling the best ever year of 1973. It is possible that this individual was seen at other localities, indeed one bird appeared over the Ouse Washes on the same day — certainly the Staines individual flew off in the right direction for it to have reached the Washes. It was published in *LBR* 48.

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Ring-billed Gull at Rainham Marsh — new to the London Area

On Feb. 25th 1979 I was scanning through a mixed flock of several hundred Black-headed and Common Gulls at Rainham Marsh, when I found an individual that looked clearly different from all the gulls around it. It was 14.20 hrs. and I watched the bird for half an hour before it flew with others to an inaccessible bed farther away. The flock was about 60 metres away, well lit much of the time by a fairly low sun, and I was using a Nickel Supra 15-60 × 60 telescope.

The following description is based entirely on notes made while the gull was under observation.

Size. It was first picked out by its noticeably large size, clearly bigger than all the Common Gulls present. If I looked away, it was possible to quickly relocate it and it was not confusable with any large Common Gull. Compared to the Common Gulls it was a heavier bird with a deeper and more rounded body. At times its body appeared nearly twice the bulk of some of the smaller Black-headed Gulls. It stood about an inch taller than the largest gulls around it and appeared to have proportionally longer legs than the Common Gulls. There were no Herring Gulls at all near but it was obviously well short of these in size.

Shape. The second most obvious feature was the bill. This was markedly deep; lengthy comparison with numerous Common Gulls showed that none of these had a bill approaching the thickness of this bird's. This was in spite of the fact that considerable variation in bill dimensions could be seen among the Common Gulls. In addition the exact shape of this bird's bill was clearly unique. The top edge of the upper mandible was nearly straight, being just slightly concave. This edge curved down prominently at the front of the bill so that the bill tip lay barely higher than the bottom edge of the lower mandible. In contrast a constant feature of the Common Gulls was a 'pinching' of the bill to quite a pointed tip, this being true of the thickest bills. A small gonys angle was most evident; this was either absent or poorly formed in the Common Gulls.

The head never appeared rounded. The forehead angle was about 50° from the horizontal. The crown was a bit rounded and not quite flat. The back of the head was at about 90° to the crown. Characteristically it had a longer-necked look than the Common Gulls, many of which were hunched and 'neckless'. The fuller, deeper body with a big rounded back was noticeable. The very long and well pointed primaries extended maybe four inches beyond the tail. The legs looked set quite well forward, with a lot of body posterior to them. At times the face showed a slight frown. It never appeared 'weak' looking.

Of course it lacked the 'aggressive' look of Herring Gull as well as that species's heavier tipped, almost drooping bill with an obvious gonys angle.

Plumage. The grey mantle was paler than in all the Common Gulls, nor did it appear such a blue-grey. Typically it appeared a bit darker than on the Black-headed Gulls though it could look the same. On the closed wing, the lesser and median coverts were grey brown with a pale edge around each feather. They therefore resembled those feathers on Common Gull, whereas on Herring Gull they are pale with obvious dark, transverse, wavy markings. The greater coverts were pale greyish, almost whitish, with lightish narrow grey-brown centres. The tertials were noticeably dark grey-chocolate with a border which was neatly defined and narrower than in many Common Gulls. The primaries were black with no pale tips visible. A few small brown rear scapular feathers were present. I noted the body as clean white. There was not much streaking on the head and this was confined to the rear half.

Soft parts. The bill pattern and colour was very noticeable, looking very like a first-year Glaucous Gull's. It was a very good pink colour with a solid black, neatly defined tip, without any black running back along the mandible edges. Though this colouring could be found on several Common Gulls, it was especially prominent on such a thick bill. The legs were clearly pink. The eyes were dark.

In flight. Though it was large on the ground, it was surprisingly more obvious when it flew off among Common Gulls, looking considerably longer in wing span. Its flight action was also different. The Common Gull wings bent a lot at the carpal joint and looked quite floppy. This bird held its wings in a slight down-bend and never changed their position, just flapping steadily and rhythmically at the body, unhurried, like one of the larger gulls.

While the upperwing was not seen fully, it showed a neat, very dark brown bar across the secondaries; this was broader and more strongly marked than on the Common Gulls.

Behaviour. It walked about a little as if looking for food but was only seen to obtain it by advancing on other gulls, often a Common Gull, and thrusting its head forward to dominate the other bird and take food from it. It tackled large muddy lumps which others were only toying with. It was dominant in many encounters, strutting up with longish legs and head held up and back a little, in a stately way.

I met some other birdwatchers soon after it had flown and told them I had seen what I thought was a Ring-billed Gull. However it did not reappear.

Previously I had seen an adult and a second-winter in Britain but not a first-winter bird such as this one. It came to light that many first-winter Ring-billed Gulls are more heavily marked on the head and body than Common Gulls at the same age; this was not the case with the Rainham bird and I was therefore inclined to suspend its identification. Later I had studied a great number of Common Gulls and had seen numerous Ring-billed Gulls in Canada in May 1980. This experience led me to feel that the Rainham bird was precisely the correct size and build for Ring-billed Gull, with the right soft part colouration, and that the paler mantle was a particularly clinching feature and maybe diagnostic in itself. I submitted the record to the *British Birds* Rarities Committee in March 1981 and it was eventually accepted, after lengthy delays that affected many Ring-billed Gull records at that time, and published in *LBR* 48.

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Ring-billed Gull at Staines Reservoir

Sunday, Nov. 28th, 1982 was a calm, bright day in west London. At 11.30 hrs. I was scanning the distant gull flock on the drained north basin of Staines Res. in the hope of picking up an adult Mediterranean Gull which had been seen on and off since late October. I was certainly not expecting much else, but my eye was drawn to one particular bird immediately it came into view. It was a medium-sized gull facing away from me at an angle, and the arresting feature was the unusually uniform pale grey back contrasting with all-black projecting primaries. As the bird's identity was not immediately apparent I continued to watch it and was almost bowled over when it casually turned its head into profile, displaying a bold black band on a yellow bill. Instantly realising that this was possibly a Ring-billed Gull (a species which I had never seen before) I began to take notes. At the time I was not familiar with many identification features of the species, my knowledge being limited to only a handful of criteria: structural differences from Common Gull, pale mantle, bare part colours in adults, and something to do with the scapular and tertial crescents, though I was not sure exactly what! From the total lack of white in the wing-tips I guessed I was looking at a second-winter individual (later confirmed in flight views) so I simply noted anything which might be useful with the intention of checking the literature when I returned home.

Conditions were excellent: good light, no wind and a dull brown background (useful for colour assessment). The major disadvantage was the range (at least 400 metres or so), but with my telescope set on $\times 45$ I was able to obtain sufficiently good views for a detailed description. The closest birds to the Ring-billed were Common and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, though all five common species were present in the loose flock of 100-150 birds, and it appeared mid-way in size between these two, perhaps closer to Lesser Black-back than Common (making it a pretty large individual). It was obviously smaller than nearby Herring Gulls, which looked brutish in comparison. Quite a long, attenuated bird, though more 'solid-looking' than Common Gulls with its less dainty head shape, seemingly caused by its heavier bill combined with shallowly sloping forehead and 'domed' crown. The bill was yellow, brightest and palest at the tip, with a broad, sharply defined black band around the gonys area. Although the actual colour of the iris was impossible to tell at the range involved, its shade appeared to be somewhere between adult Common Gull (which had a discernibly dark eye) and adult Herring Gull (which had a discernibly pale eye). Its legs were a pale greenish-yellow, brighter than on any Common Gull. I have already mentioned the uniform pale grey upperparts, which were of similar shade to adult Herring Gull, if not even paler, and totally lacking any noticeable white tertial or scapular crescent. The overall effect was extremely distinctive when compared to nearby Common Gulls, which have obvious tertial (and usually scapular) crescents in second-year and adult plumages. Apart from the all-dark primaries the remainder of the bird was fairly clean white, though there was some faint dark smudging on the head, particularly just behind the eye, and it occasionally showed an 'eye-browed' appearance — though this may have been caused by shadow rather than dark feathering it undoubtedly contributed to its less-than-benign expression.

After about 20 minutes the bird flew, circling briefly before heading away north. It looked quite long-winged (slightly reminiscent of Lesser Black-backed Gull in shape) and the black on the wings extended up from the primaries onto the primary coverts, confirming its age, and still no white could be seen in the wing-tip. Two features which I did not look for because I was unaware of them at the time (a vestigial tail band and/or faint secondary bar), would have been unqualified clinchers for a second-winter Ring-billed Gull. Although it is possible that one or both features were present (they are

not always), unfortunately, neither caught my eye during the brief flight views.

During the bird's stay nobody else on the causeway had been within hailing range, so I was now faced with the unenviable task of submitting a 'single observer — no previous experience' record! On arriving home I compared my notes with my available literature (mostly P. J. Grant's writings) and realised that my main task was to eliminate second-winter Common and third-winter Herring Gulls. There seemed to be seven main points in favour of my identification:

1. Size and structure.
2. Complete absence of tertial crescent.
3. Colour of upperparts.
4. Apparent absence of any white in wing-tip (though second-winter Commons can occasionally show this feature too).
5. Bill size, colour and pattern.
6. Eye 'shade'.
7. Leg colour.

Having thus satisfied the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, this individual became the second accepted record of Ring-billed Gull in the London Area. It was published in *LBR* 48.

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PARSLOW, J., 1967. Changes in status among breeding birds in Britain and Ireland. *Brit. Birds* 60 : 276-7.

PARSLOW, J., 1973. *Breeding Birds of Britain and Ireland*. Berkhamsted.

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